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Yeltsin Sends Letter on Disarmament to UN

LD3001125192 Moscow TASS in English
1206 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 30 (ITAR-TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin send a letter to UN Secretary General Butrus Ghali setting out Russia's main guidelines in the field of arms reduction and disarmament.

In his letter, the Russian president assured the UN secretary general that as permanent member of the Security Council and aware of its special responsibility before the world, Russia "is prepared to contribute to forming a single global space of cooperation and security."

Russia confirms that "under no circumstances it will use armed force against other state, except in response to aggression against it, its friends and allies." It also renounces the first use of nuclear weapons.

Yeltsin emphasised that as successor to the former USSR, Russia reaffirms its obligations under existing and signed bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements in the field of arms reduction and disarmament. It will fulfil them unswervingly.

Russia will develop armed forces in order to exclude their use for purposes other than defence and peacekeeping operations, in accordance with decisions of the world body.

Russia will seek to reduce nuclear forces to a minimum level that would guarantee prevention of war. Stimulus to make the first disarming strike should be excluded, the letter stresses.

"We are no longer enemies of the U.S. and other NATO countries and regard as obsolete the situation when we hold each other in nuclear sights," Yeltsin said. "One needs to resolutely get rid of the legacy of the period of confrontation and 'cold war' through joint efforts."

The letter urges other nuclear powers, China, Britain and France, to join in the process of real nuclear disarmament.

President Yeltsin familiarised the UN secretary general with Russia's initiatives on all key issues of the process of arms limitation and reduction, including in the field of strategic offensive weapons, tactical nuclear weapons, ABM and space, in the field of prohibition of nuclear arms tests and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in the field of conventional weapons, chemical and biological weapons, conversion of military production.

Officials, Others React to Yeltsin Statement

Yakovlev on Support

LD3001062792 Moscow TASS in English
0611 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By TASS-ITAR correspondent Yuriy Sidorov]

[Text] London January 30 ITAR-TASS—President Boris Yeltsin of Russia sincerely strives for nuclear disarmament, Aleksandr Yakovlev, former adviser to the Soviet president, told the ITN television network on Wednesday [29 January]. Yakovlev is now in London at the invitation of the Royal Institute for International Relations.

In response to a question as to whether the Russian president may count on the support by other republics in the Commonwealth of Independent States for the implementation of a plan put forward by him for radical cuts in nuclear arsenals, Yakovlev said Yeltsin, Nazarbayev, Kravchuk and Shushkevich agreed on the issue in principle.

There will be probably no complications in this respect as regards Belarus and Kazakhstan. As far as Ukraine is concerned this is another matter. "But I believe that under the pressure of his own people and Western states, Kravchuk will support nuclear disarmament."

Asked whether a threat to peace would emerge in view of the current deplorable condition of the nuclear arms of the former Soviet Union and the morale of those who are responsible for guarding them, Yakovlev said: "Even though I am not a specialist, I still believe that a disaster may occur at any point of the globe. Therefore the sooner these weapons are eliminated, the better it will be for Russia, the United States, for your country and for all other states."

Having described the position of the servicemen of the former Soviet Union as difficult and uncertain, Yakovlev emphasised that their problems could hardly be associated with nuclear danger.

'Viewpoint' on Missiles, Targets

PM2901140192 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
29 Jan 92 p 5

[Anatoliy Karpychev "Viewpoint": "What is the Target?"]

[Text] Russian President B.N. Yeltsin's statement that the former USSR's nuclear missiles will no longer be targeted on U.S. cities was the main news item of the day. That comment was made in an interview on ABC TV and consequently, as so often in the past, we learned about the statement in our country from the foreign mass media and, to be honest, it was somewhat vexing that the president did not give us the news first.

The fact that our missiles and the Americans' were targeted, especially during the cold war years, was clear to everyone. Propagandists used this almost physical sense of threat—both from the other side and from ours—to formulate their "theory of fear" which often determined the superpowers' decisions. When discussion turned to giving us aid, I well remember how U.S. Defense Secretary Cheney warned that there is no need to hurry with aid because there is no very great desire to do this when there are 27,000 nuclear weapons sited on USSR territory. And since the West did not ask us for aid we cannot criticize it becuase its missiles are targeted on us.

The Russian president's statement raises a number of questions. The first is this. Henceforth, U.S. cities will not be a target for Soviet nuclear missiles, which is reasonable, but will Soviet cities remain a target for U.S. warheads? Will it not be the same as with the secret devices which Vadim Bakatin presented as a "gift" to the Americans? I am not asking that we be given something back in Washington for those devices, the main thing is the rules of the game.

Judging from the first official reports, the United States is not disposed to change anything. White House spokesman Fitzwater has said that this step by President Yeltsin "is important and very positive." "People believe the president" and hope to receive more detailed information from him. At the same time, Fitzwater noted, the United States is not retargeting its nuclear weapons aimed at the Commonwealth of Independent States. Why? The U.S. side "cannot ignore the fact that the scale of the former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal has still not undergone significant change and the targets of these weapons cannot be determined from independent sources."

The second question is this: What are we going to target now? Not the desert, surely? I rang the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces main command. They told me:

"The missiles will be targeted on installations of military significance which represent a real military threat."

Western Response Viewed

PM2901144192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Jan 92 morning Edition p 5

[Report by Aleksandr Krivopalov and Aleksandr Sychev: "Fewer Nuclear Targets, Less Risk"]

[Text] President Yeltsin's initiative put forward in an interview for ABC TV on excluding U.S. cities from the list of installations targeted by the strategic nuclear missiles under Russian control has met with a positive response in Washington. The president's press secretary, M. Fitzwater, set out the U.S. position.

"We welcome any steps aimed at reducing the threat and risk for the United States and its allies from the states of the former Soviet Union," he said. "In this connection the Russian president's statement is an important and very positive step in that direction."

Washington expressed confidence that matters will turn out exactly as the Russian president says but does not plan a reciprocal move yet. U.S. strategic missiles will not be retargeted and the cities of the former Soviet Union will remain a target for a nuclear strike even though we are no longer considered a U.S. "potential enemy."

What is going on? M. Fitzwater explained the U.S. position by saying that his country cannot verify the Russian missiles' actual targets on the basis of independent sources and that the scale of the former USSR's strategic nuclear potential has not undergone significant change as yet. However, the president's press secretary did not rule out the possibility that the United States will adopt similar measures in the future.

UK Defense Secretary King also expressed approval of Yeltsin's statement but noted that Britain's "nuclear deterrent potential" will be preserved at the minimum necessary level but in the future it will be possible to discuss reducing it, too.

On the whole, the reaction in the world to the Russian initiative has been very mixed and it is hard to say whether it aroused greater satisfaction or anxiety. The fact is that the question of new targets for the strategic missiles thus released has not been decided, which intensified the nonnuclear world's concern caused by the statement of U.S. Defense Secretary Cheney. Some time ago the Pentagon head talked about the need to be ready for the possibility that there could be far more nuclear powers in the world than there are today. The United States must maintain its strategic weapons so that no one considers delivering a nuclear strike against the United States. From this assumption he concluded that new targets for the U.S. missiles around the world should be determined.

Thus the two largest nuclear powers are looking for new targets because the Soviet missiles thus released have not been aimed toward space, THE WASHINGTON POST writes. Because of the uncertainty over this question, an article in the BERLINER ZEITUNG writes, the old distrust will grow on new soil elsewhere in the world.

The first symptoms of distrust have already appeared in Japan, where the U.S. ambassador needed to refute a report from the KYODO news agency citing a report allegedly prepared by the U.S. Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff [obyedinennyy komitet opredeleniya tseley strategicheskikh sil], which names Japan, Germany, India, China, North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Algeria, and South Africa among the list of targets.

The U.S. ambassador seemed to quell this source of distrust by giving an assurance that the U.S. allies are under the protection of America's "nuclear umbrella." But the far more serious problem connected with the Nuclear Weapon Nonproliferation Treaty remains unresolved. Neither the Russian nor the U.S. governments said anything about that when putting forward their plans for the future.

Japan's Miyazawa Remarks

LD3001092192 Moscow TASS in English 0803 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Solntsev]

[Text] Tokyo January 30 TASS—Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa of Japan today made a positive assessment, although a rather reserved one, of Boris Yeltsin's statement "On Russia's Policy on Limitation and Reduction of Weapons."

"I think this is a good thing in principle and it can be assessed positively," he said in response to journalists' questions in parliament.

At the same time the head of the Japanese Government pointed out that "there are various problems which should be closely examined by specialists."

The Japanese Government positively assesses the fact that the president of Russia has shown a broad and active approach to disarmament issues, sources in the Japanese Foreign Ministry told TASS today.

According to the sources, Tokyo hopes that nuclear weapons on the territories of Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will be under a strict centralised control and that CIS members themselves will actively meet commitments in the field of arms control and disarmament.

The Japanese Government expresses hope that the initiatives proposed by U.S. President George Bush and Russia's President Boris Yeltsin will promote further effort in the field of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of global peace and security, the ministry sources said.

IZVESTIYA Views U.S. Arms Plans

PM2901161192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 7

[Report by Artur Blinov: "The Pentagon's New Accents. The United States Is Saving Billions, But Not at the Expense of SDI"]

[Text] The paradox of U.S. military programs is that steps to cut the strategic arsenal and reduce purchases of several types of armaments will be announced in the very near future, but the "strategic defense initiative" (SDI) will not be affected by this.

As has been reported, the U.S. media predicted that President G. Bush, in his next State of the Union message, will advocate the elimination of a sizeable part of the strategic forces of the United States and the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]—ground-based ICBM's with multiple warheads. As a gesture, compensating in some degree for the disruption of the nuclear balance (the CIS has more of these missiles than the United States), a willingness will be expressed to reduce some of the warheads on U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The reductions will also affect other military programs. For instance, according to press data, U.S. Secretary of Energy James Watkins is preparing to halt production of the brand-new W-88 warhead for submarine-launched ballistic missiles. So the plant in Rocky Flats will suspend operations indefinitely.

The administration leadership says that the new initiatives are the direct result of the change in the overall strategic situation since the end of the cold war. For example, new CIA Director R. Gates addressed Congress last week and said that "for another decade at least... there is no need to fear other countries' special armaments posing a danger to U.S. territory."

There is a real chance to effect military expenditure savings, which is something the United States needs too, since it faces the problem of an acute budget deficit. There is information to suggest that the G. Bush administration is planning to cut the Pentagon budget by $3-4 billion in the next fiscal year.

In preparation for these cuts, the U.S. military department is voicing the intention to accept some new armaments only in the form of prototypes or designs, without starting series production of them. What there will be in fact is a kind of order book containing various models of equipment—it will be used only in the event of a military threat and in accordance with the specific situation.

The systematic development of new models of equipment without putting them into series production will enable the U.S. Armed Forces to always be in the vanguard of military-technical achievements, without overstretching its budget. It is proposed to reduce the scale of several military programs that are already being implemented, including purchases of the B-2 strategic bomber—the most expensive combat aircraft.

At the same time, there is a military program which, to all appearances, will not be affected by the budget cuts. That is, the plans for the creation of ABM defense under the SDI program. Expenditure on the SDI program in the current fiscal year was increased by $1 billion compared with the previous year. According to a report in THE WASHINGTON POST, another $1 billion will be added to the SDI budget in the new, 1993 fiscal year, bringing the total to $5 billion.

According to a plan approved last year by Congress, a limited ABM defense system for part of the territory of the United States will be deployed by 1996.

Eminent U.S. specialists note that the deployment of ABM defenses even in this limited form will obviously require a revision of the ABM Treaty signed in 1972 between the USSR and the United States. There are signs that the U.S. side is already making preparations for such a step.

The list of agreements was in the hands of members of the U.S. delegation, headed by U.S. Under Secretary of State R. Bartholomew, which went recently to Moscow and the capitals of the other nuclear republics of the CIS. The U.S. delegation's aim, THE WASHINGTON POST reports, was to obtain direct confirmation from the republics' leaders that they would observe the agreements in the arms control sphere that were concluded with the participation of the Soviet Union. They were referring primarily to the Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Armaments and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

The U.S. delegation did not broach the question of the fate of the ABM Treaty at these talks, the U.S. newspaper claims. An unidentified U.S. Administration spokesman explained to the newspaper's correspondent that this "omission" was due to the fact that the United States "does not intend to revise the Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Armaments, but intends to hold talks on amending the ABM Treaty."

Not all the U.S. experts on military-strategic matters support the plans for a revision of the ABM Treaty and deployment of ABM systems. According to Matthew Bann [name as transliterated], an eminent U.S. expert in the arms control sphere, the implementation of the "strategic defense initiative" could lead to a "stupid waste of countless billions in the interests of creating a debatable defense against a nonexistent threat."

Commentator on Bush, Yeltsin Arms Initiatives

LD2901205392 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1810 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Several hours after President Bush ended his State of the Union message to Congress, in which he announced the reduction of the nuclear arsenal of the United States the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, appeared on television in Moscow to outline Russia's measures in that field. Vladislav Kozyakov comments:

The latest decisions to reduce strategic arms made by Moscow and Washington are very reminiscent of the moves they exchanged last autumn, when the United States said it would scrap most of its tactical nuclear arms and Moscow responded with cuts in short-range nuclear armaments that went even farther than the United States' initiatives. What was still more remarkable was that both sides decided to slash their nuclear arsenals not as a result of prolonged negotiations but through unilateral steps. This time the scenario has been the same, except for the fact that the issue on the agenda is strategic arms, posing a threat to the very existence of humanity. Needless to say, strategic nuclear arms have always been as costly as destabilizing.

President Yeltsin and President Bush are going to make a real breakthrough in the sphere of nuclear disarmament. The agreements they have already signed go much farther than the already signed INF Treaty. Russia and the United States are stopping the production and withdrawing from operational service and scrapping a whole number of strategic offensive arms. This applies to nuclear warheads, ballistic misiles, heavy bombers and submarines—in other words, the arsenals with which Moscow and Washington threatened each other for decades are diminishing.

The United States and Russia have become able to take these reciprocal steps due to fundamental changes in the world. President Bush has said that in the past 12 months the world has known changes of almost biblical proportions. One can even say that the latest world events have paved the way for further steps to build a new world order. In his television address the Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction must be eliminated. As long as they remain, we believe they would no longer be aimed at corresponding targets in Russia and America.

At the same time the Russian president came out with a number of other initiatives apart from nuclear arms reductions—a stop to nuclear testing, further cuts in tactical weapons, bans on chemical and biological weapons, restrictions on the production of fissionable materials and other fields of disarmament. Moscow and Washington had discussed some of those problems before, however wihout reaching agreement. However, one must remember that what seemed impossible yesterday can become a reality today. Russia and America have a unique chance to make another joint contribution to making the world a safer place for all.

'Nothing Criminal' in Libya's Interests

PM2701142592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Sergey Leskov article: "The Bomb Cannot Be Made at Soviet Nuclear Centers Abroad, But Our Specialists Can Fill This Gap"]

[Text] Several mass media recently disseminated reports that "Third World" countries are proposing to begin production of nuclear weapons at their own nuclear centers, constructed with the Soviet Union's participation. Numerous misgivings are especially voiced in respect of Libya, where the USSR constructed the "Tajura" nuclear research center in 1982. What do our specialists directly involved in planning, constructing, and operating the center think about this?

A few words about the subject of concern. The "Tajura" research center is a complex of 30 buildings and engineering installations. It includes a test bed for the study of reactor physics, a "Tokamak" facility, a neutron generator, a radiochemical laboratory for the production of radiopharmaceutical preparations, physics laboratories, and, most importantly, a pool-type research reactor with a 10-megawatt capacity. The Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute trained the Libyan personnel, and approximately 200 specialists were trained in all. To this day Soviet scientists travel out to the country annually, advise their Libyan colleagues, and conduct joint experiments at "Tajura."

V. Panin, chief of an Atomic Energy Institute laboratory, is firmly convinced that the design and capacity of the nuclear installations at the "Tajura" center rule out, in principle, any possibility whatever of carrying out work in the sphere of creating atomic weapons and producing weapons-grade plutonium. A. Gagarinskiy, deputy director of the Atomic Energy Institute, emphasized that "tainted" work has never been done at the Soviet center. In addition, all the installations are open to control by the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has no complaints against Libya.

I recall, however, that just over a year ago the same soothing reassurances were being given concerning the nuclear potential of Iraq, where there are also installations constructed with our country's assistance. It has subsequently come to light how greatly we underestimated Iraq's potential. Will reality not refute the present guarantees too? Particularly as Libya spares no expense on its specialists: A period of training in our country is supplemented by university education in Britain or the United States. Professor A. Demidov introduced an explanation: In addition to low-capacity Soviet nuclear plants, Iraq had a 35-megawatt French reactor, which made it possible to carry out work for military purposes. It was this reactor, above all, that was subject to destruction by the allies' forces at the time of the conflict in the Persian Gulf.

Our specialists see nothing criminal in Libya's actual interest in atomic matters. In the seventies the country, which was quite rich thanks to "petrodollars," decided to improve its scientific potential. The most promising sphere was considered the atomic one, which combines several scientific disciplines—from physics and chemistry to medicine, biology, and agriculture. At a time of acute financial difficulties this experience can also serve as an example for us. As A. Gagarinskiy emphasized, barriers to peaceful scientific cooperation will produce nothing in the modern world. If we refuse to help, many others will be found who are willing. Moreover, Libya has always paid in cash and not asked for credits.

Soviet research centers have also been constructed in Egypt and Vietnam, and plans drawn up for Syria and Cuba. Today many utterly dissimilar countries are gambling on nuclear power generation and nuclear physics: Argentina and Taiwan, Guatemala and the Philippines. This is why the following question does not leave the pages of the world press: Will our specialists not reach out to "Third World" countries? The leadership of the Atomic Energy Institute has declared that not a single official invitation has been received so far. In addition, the overwhelming majority of Atomic Energy Institute staffers work in the sphere of the peaceful atom. However, this is not very reassuring: As the specialists themselves are aware, their excellent basic education will enable them to requalify for military subjects with no great difficulty. It has to be recognized that you cannot stop people by means of persuasion. If money is not found in the treasury for the sector, lines of our specialists will stretch out—in this way they will present the world community with a serious problem.

Brazil Spokesman on Hiring Foreign Scholars

OW2901020592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1601 GMT 28 Jan 92

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Brazil does not plan to build own nuclear weapons and use nuclear energy for military purposes, said Carlos Martins Ceglia, press-attache of the Brazil Embassy in Moscow. He cited as proof of his statement the Vienna agreement which Brazil and Argentina had signed last year, accepting the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] control over all nuclear facilities on their territories.

Brazil does have a stake in hiring high-level foreign scholars, said the Brazilian diplomat. Brazilian agencies have signed several contracts with foreign, including former Soviet, scholars. The government of the Sao Paolo state expressed interest in inviting some thirty CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] scholars for two-three year lecturing tours with Brazil universities.

The diplomat emphasized that they would be employed in civilian, not military, fields, and that they would not be asked to develop nuclear projects. However, Brazil President Fernando Collor de Mello is critical of wholesale "imports" of foreign experts, said the diplomat, and this sentiment is echoed by the Brazil scholarly community that is not interested in foreign competition. The Brazil emigration and immigration legislation is also an obstacle to hiring large numbers of foreign scholars.

Tactical Nuclear Arms Leave Belarus

924P0056B Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 28 Jan 92 p 3

[Report from KRASNAYA ZVEZDA and TASS correspondents: "First Lot of Nuclear Weapons Taken Out of Belarus and Sent to Russia"]

[Text] Minsk, 27 Jan—The first lot of tactical nuclear weapons has already been taken out of Belarus and sent to territory of the Russian Federation where it will be destroyed in accordance with an understanding, reported Leonid Privalov, deputy chairman of the Belorussian parliament's Commission on National Security. Appearing at a "roundtable" for journalists covering a visit by French Minister of Foreign Affairs Roland Dumas, he confirmed the republic's adherence to becoming a nonnuclear, neutral state in the near future.

Leonid Privalov stated that "Belarus will become free of strategic weapons around 1996 or 1997." After that time, only the Armed Forces of the Belarus Republic will remain in its territory. The deputy chairman of the parliamentary commission did not provide figures as to their contemplated strength, but noted that in Denmark, for example, the army is comprised of 27,000 individuals—this with a population of 5 million. "Belarus has 10 million residents—one need only solve the equation," Privalov stated. And he added: "Belarus does not see any enemy today we might have to fight—neither at its borders nor anywhere beyond."

Further on Kazakhstan Missile Launch

924P0052A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Article by Vladimir Nadein: "Alma-Ata Was Actually Not Informed of the Missile Launch, But the Main Reproaches Are Being Directed at the Press"]

[Text] **"Kazakhstan, now a nuclear power, contends that it did not know anything about the test ICBM launch conducted by the still powerful central military command, which is practically the only one remaining from the former communist superpower."**

That is the way a REUTER correspondent commented on the recent article in IZVESTIYA concerning the fact that the military did not inform the Kazakhstan authorities of the SS-19 launch beforehand.

The press service of Kazakhstan's President N. Nazarbayev promptly disseminated a report which emphasized that the 20 December 1991 launch of the space vehicle rocket booster "Rokot" (this is the name of the modified SS-19 military missile) at the Baykonyr space launch facility was undertaken "for scientific purposes in the conversion program" and that "reports on the testing of a ballistic missile for military purposes are not valid."

This is also fully corroborated by the reaction of official Washington. "The United States was notified of the testing of the space delivery of cargoes carried out to determine whether this missile is capable of serving commercial purposes," declared U.S. Department of Defense spokesman Oborn, as reported by REUTER. "They said that there are no warheads on the missile, and we have no reason not to believe this."

Oborn added that the notification came "from the central authorities in Moscow," and his colleague, U.S. Air Force Captain Susan Strednanski, stressed that this occurred 24 hours before the launch. "We are continuing to study this launch," said Captain Strednanski. "Based on national verification means we were able to ascertain that the test flight was not associated with previous SS-19 tests."

While the purely military aspect of the problem does not raise doubts, the problem of control over space launches remains urgent.

As indicated by agency reports, this problem is central to foreign partners as well. "Control of the nuclear arsenal of the former Soviet Union is a subject of main concern to Western countries, some of whom tied assistance to the countries of the new Commonwealth with adherence to international disarmament agreements," writes an ASSOCIATED PRESS columnist.

"Inasmuch as until now the member states of the Commonwealth have not yet worked out mutually acceptable approaches to the formation of armed forces, including the operation of the test range (especially since on 20 December a final decision on the formation of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] did not yet exist), we think it is superfluous to dramatize each case of a test launch of space objects," N. Nazarbayev's press service report states.

Repeating the well-known position of the president of Kazakhstan on military questions and the use of space technology, the press service particularly emphasized the need to resolve all these problems "in phases, without haste, in order not to allow chaos and confusion in the process of reforming the army."

However, the reserved and far-sighted leader of Kazakhstan could not but admit that, "at the same time, Kazakhstan realizes that questions of control have really come to a head." Considering that the press service does not refute the main news that the launch was conducted without notifying the authorities of an independent country, such a conclusion, despite the outward appearance of a passing remark, is paramount.

However, it was not the position of the central military departments, to which the leadership of Kazakhstan reacted not only in a restrained way, but even with understanding, that was subjected to criticism. The sharpest words were addressed to the mass media: "The press service of the president of Kazakhstan considers the employment of any form of pressure on an independent state on this question to be intolerable, which is clearly overlooked in individual articles of the press both abroad and in the Commonwealth."

Nazarbayev's Plan on Nuclear Weapons Viewed

PM2901132192 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 2

[Ye. Dotsuk report: "Kazakhstan Is Not Trading Missiles: Foreign Press Reports Denied in Alma-Ata"]

[Text] Since mid-January, people from the apparatus of the president of Kazakhstan, just like the president himself, have been constantly shrugging their shoulders in despair. Not yet experienced in major-league political games, the new people in Alma-Ata have reacted very painfully to the series of recent mass media reports about Kazakhstan selling nuclear weapons to Iran. A couple of days ago Britain's DAILY MAIL, for example, reported that "Kazakhstan President N. Nazarbayev has already made at least two visits to Tehran, which have not been publicized, and discussed the terms for concluding the deal." According to the newspaper's information, "the price on which agreement has been reached is $130-150 million."

There is no doubt that Nazarbayev has not flown twice to Tehran in secret. Recently he has dropped out of sight for only two days—last week he caught influenza, but the president held regular telephone conversations, he modified plans, and he issued instructions on day-to-day business.

The interview which Nazarbayev is said to have given to the newspaper SAWT AL-KUWAIT's correspondent has also caused considerable surprise in official Alma-Ata circles. This interview is extensively quoted in THE WASHINGTON TIMES: "We are seeking to strengthen ties with the Arab and Islamic world," Nazarbayev stated, "since we also belong to that world and are guided by the Holy Koran in all aspects of life." This in no way squares with what Nazarbayev has always said, stressing that Kazakhstan is not an Islamic state and that the Kazakhs have never been religious fanatics; moreover, half the population there is Christian, and it is clear what the consequences of the ideas of Islamic fundamentalism could be for the republic.

People in Alma-Ata are sure that the disinformation that keeps appearing about Kazakhstan selling nuclear weapons to Iran is aimed at eliminating those weapons on the territory of the former Soviet republic through economic and political sanctions, and imposing bans on the export of modern technologies to Kazakhstan and restrictions on humanitarian aid and credits. This danger, judging by the series of recent articles in the Western press, could become real. How will Nazarabayev, who values his reputation, conduct himself in this regard? He will scarcely agree to give up immediately the Union's nuclear legacy. While he was prepared to do this as part of the former country, where there were guarantees of a unified defense system, now, as president of an autonomous state, he is most likely to seek to bide his time.

Reports of Role in 'Islamic Bomb' Weighed

924P0058A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by Vladimir Lagovskiy: "Will Soviet Physicists Be Making Islamic Bombs?"]

[Text] The possible flight of Soviet atomic scientists abroad presents a graver danger than the leak of radioactive substances from the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station—this is about how the Western mass media have commented on the threat of nuclear weapons propagation which has arisen as a result of the disintegration of the USSR. In the way of proof, they point out that emissaries of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi have already proposed that two scientific researchers at the Atomic Energy Institute imeni I.V. Kurchatov (IAE) continue their research in Libya. But, fortunately, the men have apparently refused.

IAE deputy director Andrey Gagarinskiy shed some light on the problem when he told RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA that two institute specialists are already working in Libya. But this presents no special cause for concern.

The fact is that one of the orientations of IAE activity is related to distribution of the "peaceful atom" on the planet—the institute is establishing nuclear research centers abroad. And there is no secret about this. It is well known that in accordance with an intergovernmental agreement between the USSR and Libya reached 24 February 1977, a contract was signed for the construction in Libya of one of these centers under the name "Tazhura." In December 1980 a research reactor of 10 megawatt capacity and other installations were activated. The reactor is operating successfully today. Over the entire period, 120 Soviet specialists have worked at the Tazhura nuclear center. Two are working there today according to the contract.

Neither the Libyan center itself nor Soviet specialists, according to Gagarinskiy and other IAE scientists, is connected with the production of nuclear weapons. And the reactor's capacity is not sufficient to make the plutonium, for example, for an atomic bomb. All the same, no one has given a 100-percent guarantee that this cannot be done in principle. Just as no one has given any guarantee that the IAE is capable of tracking all the moves of its former employees abroad.

And, frankly speaking, there are places for them to move. For reference—the USSR built large-scale research reactors under the scientific directorship of the IAE in Egypt, Iraq, and Vietnam (and the largest in Libya). Construction projects are underway in Cuba. A project design was developed for Syria; negotiations are being conducted with Morocco. There are presently no contacts with Iraq, according to IAE employees, but cooperation continues with the other countries.

A legitimate question—why nuclear research centers to the enumerated countries of the so-called Third World? Andrey Gagarinskiy explained this through the striving of each country to develop its own science and technology. And nuclear research enables a country to assimilate an entire field of modern knowledge.

Possibly. But I will allow myself to make a different observation. After all, no one denies that the distance between civilian and military nuclear research is not all that great. And the intellectual potential accumulated in Iraq, Libya, or Cuba, let us say, enables them to work on nuclear weapons. And so the reactors constructed there are fully capable of becoming centers of emergence of these processes. And it is possible that at the very outset our country recognized this danger as it concluded the contracts. But wielding strong political and economic influence, it counted on being able to keep the situation under control. Today the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] carries no weight with its former friends—this along with all the consequences issuing therefrom. That same Libya which promised to build atomic stations never has done so. Yet research at the Tazhura center continues to be active. And indeed, not everything turned out smoothly in Iraq in spite of solemn assurances of nuclear innocence.

However, we cannot blame the former USSR alone for the fact that Third World countries are presently making an attempt at nuclear weapons. There are enough Western specialists in their territories as well. And reactor personnel in Libya and Iraq studied in Britain and the United States for the most part. In short, let us consider ourselves together responsible.

Scientists Cited on Nuclear Brain Drain

PM2701124392 Paris LIBERATION in French 20 Jan 92 pp 2-3

[Didier Francois report: "Mercenary Threat to Former USSR Nuclear Industry"]

[Excerpts] Dubna—There is nothing here but intellect, little actual manpower. The particle accelerator, the only asset here, goes on working ad infitium, supplying the researchers' mathematical calculations with experimental data. There is nothing concrete involved. Nestling in the forest, Dubna shivers. The future is ominous and uncertainty is undermining the complacency of this wealthy little town which has all the charm of a Swiss village. Until recently a closed city, Dubna, which lies 500 km south of Moscow, is totally dependent on the goodwill of the center. The pampered pet of successive governments, Dubna has never wanted for anything. But its supplies come from Moscow, and the state system is collapsing. In the new Russia either you buy or you sell. Despite their status the nuclear scientists of the Joint Nuclear Physics Institute are having a hard time of it. Since the abolition of socialist privileges, fundamental research no longer keeps its people fed.

It is the same in Dubna as it is throughout the former USSR's "atomic archipelago:" A new and terrifying situation is developing on the ruins of what was a scientific superpower. Several thousand top-level scientists and highly skilled technicians with access to the most closely guarded military secrets have been abruptly pitched into a race for survival with no assets save their theoretical knowledge and their expertise. They constitute prime targets for states seeking the nuclear grail. A massive exodus of former Soviet academics, economic migrants to more prosperous lands, could help to redraw the geopolitical map of the world.

In a report leaked last month, the CIA raised the specter of white-coated "mercenaries." Two weeks ago, the Russian intelligence services presented similar conclusions to their boss, Academician Primakov. An influx of "specialists" would be especially ominous, they believe, in countries which have reached the "final stage of development of their own nuclear weapons"—North Korea, Iraq, India, and Pakistan, they think. Moscow's scientific community is buzzing with rumors about some mysterious recruiting officers of Algerian origin reportedly doing the rounds of laboratories in the Islamic republics on behalf of Baghdad. More specifically, the assistant director of the Thermonuclear Physics Department at the Kurchatov Institute in Moscow asserts that Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's envoys have approached two of his colleagues offering them $2,000 a month to continue their research in Libya. The report was confirmed by Nikolay Ponomarev-Stepnoy, first deputy director of the Atomic Energy Institute. "But," he explained, "these offers were rejected."

It is the same in Dubna where, sworn to secrecy, a physicist specializing in rare isotopes asserted that "a Libyan delegation passed through last month" offering certain scientists $3,000. They all turned the invitation down, this scientist asserted. "Think about it," he exclaimed. "$3,000 a month! That is a fortune in Russia."

Visit to Joint Nuclear Physics Institute

[Passage omitted] Since 1956 the institute has welcomed researchers from the "fraternal countries." Beijing trained its first nuclear power specialists here before it pulled out when Khrushchev refused to help Mao Zedong acquire a nuclear bomb as well. At present Korean scientists—North Koreans—are working at Dubna.

Yuriy Oganesyan, head of the nuclear reactions laboratory, is an academic who supports "this fine open-door policy. The ideology must be taken out of science," he asserted with conviction, "the kind of country where I would offer my experience is all the same to me if it has the equipment essential for my experience to be utilized."

"Knife manufacturers are not required to know who is going to use their knife, a surgeon or a gangster"—this theoretician, totally devoted to the development of his science, went on—"and it is the same with nuclear energy. Research is indispensable for the understanding of nature. Whether it is subsequently used to produce a bomb or a power station depends not on the scientist but the politician. Researchers, be they Iraqi, Kuwaiti, French, or Soviet, must have the right to work anywhere at all. Like Abu Salam, the great Nobel physicist. He is Pakistani."

Proud of his latest achievement, Yuriy Oganesyan walks the institute's corridors from one particle accelerator to another. Wherever he goes there are control rooms crammed with electronics, protection systems, generators, and high-tension cable, "technology that does not exist in the wild Sahara," the boss of the place comments, a slight smile on his face.

"You cannot buy science ready-made," he went on, pointing to some equipment to support his argument, "it isn't just a few technicians who make the difference. A country which wants to develop a nuclear arsenal must first achieve a good general level in numerous spheres, magnetic fields, vacuums, and high frequencies. This costs billions and takes time. If a hundred or so academics were to leave this would not change things fundamentally. Perhaps it would enable some to make slightly faster progress, to earn some money, and build a primitive kind of bomb."

This was the main theme of all the top-level specialists who were questioned. "Nuclear technology ceased to be a secret over 20 years ago," Aleksandr Viedienov joked "India, Israel, South Africa, Pakistan, and even Iraq to a large extent are perfectly capable of equippping themselves with a bomb without the involvement of Soviet scientists. If there is a brain drain that is to be feared, it is one involving researchers currently working on the weapons of the future." This is the warning of an expert; his work on lasers and artificial intelligence is still "sensitive" enough for him to refuse to specify the nature of the department he heads at the Kurchatov Institute.

At this level, however, the West is more attractive than the sands of Libya: First the United States, then Germany and Israel. In Moscow they no longer keep count of the number of Soviet mathematicians or physicists installed at Maryland or Berkeley.

The Landau Theoretical Physics Institute, the most important in the USSR with 80 research workers, has made this its modus operandi: Two-thirds of its staff spend varying periods of time working abroad. "The question is whether they will return one day," Vitaliy Ginzberg, former director of the Theoretical Physics Department at the Academy of Sciences' Lebedev Institute, said bitterly, "the situation in the country is very bad and there is no reason to think that it is going to improve. Thus those who are abroad now will stay there until the better times come."

At his own laboratory, Andrey Sakharov's old department, around a dozen out of 70 top-level scientists have moved abroad for good: a couple to the United States, another to Copenhagen, five or six more to Germany and one to Tel Aviv. "In the past, academicians were the richest people in this country," Vitaliy Ginzberg said ruefully, "now all that is changing. Bus drivers have the same salary as an established physicist, not to mention taxi drivers. At 500 rubles a month a young researcher is living below the poverty line." [passage omitted]

Shaposhnikov Meets With U.S. Secretary Baker

LD2901194192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1626 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)— "Boris Yeltsin's new disarmament initiatives have enjoyed a lively reception in the United States. It will be necessary to study them in greater detail, and they will be discussed no doubt at the forthcoming meeting of the U.S. and Russian presidents at Camp David." That is what U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said regarding today's statement by the Russian president on the state policy in the sphere of arms limitation and reduction when he met Air Force Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces.

This is what the TASS correspondent was told by Lt. Gen. Valeriy Manilov, the head of the information directorate of the CIS Armed Forces: He participated in the meeting, which took place "behind closed doors." As the military chief stressed, the sides were unanimous regarding the fact that at present the United States and the Commonwealth countries have reached a level of mutual understanding and trust which allows them to speed up the pace of addressing the whole range of disarmament problems. They also confirmed their readiness to meet each other half way.

Issues connected with the construction of the CIS Armed Forces and preparations for the forthcoming meeting at the level of member states of the Commonwealth, set for 14 February, were also touched upon during the conversation. The sides agreed that there is a pressing need and that the preconditions exist for the constructive tackling of military problems in Minsk because it meets the vital interests of the peoples and the interests of strengthening stability in Europe and in the whole world, Valeriy Manilov pointed out.

At the meeting, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov said: "I think that the contemporary generation of politicians must prove by its practical actions that it deserves the high responsibility vested in them by the present contradictory and complex time, and that it deserves the trust placed in them by the people." The commander in chief of the CIS Armed Forces stressed that the future of the Commonwealth's existence and its authority will, to a large extent, depend on the tackling of a wide range of defense issues.

Information 'Head' Cited

OW2901184792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A meeting between Marshal Shaposhnikov, Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth Armed Forces, and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Moscow Wednesday focused on the future of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Lt.-Gen. Valeriy Manilov, head of the information board, told IF [INTERFAX] that the Commonwealth Armed Forces under a single command and with centralized control over nuclear arms will continue to be one of the guarantors of security in Europe and in the entire world.

According to Mr. Baker, Marshal Shaposhnikov will be welcome to visit the USA.

Western Reaction to CIS Prospects Viewed

924C0464A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Jan 92 p 3

[Article by Yuriy Sigov: "The West Doubts the Durability of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]"; subtitled: "Overseas the Emphasis Is Being Put on Individual Republics, Not the Commonwealth as a Whole"]

[Text] Against the background of the permanent political and economic disputes of the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the world community is increasingly voicing doubts as to the feasibility of the creation of any lasting state association on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Even certain leaders of the republics which have become a part of the CIS consider the Commonwealth some transitional structure en route from membership of the USSR to full independence. Even greater caution in the estimates of the viability of the CIS is being manifested in the West.

The actual fact of the formation of the CIS has been treated in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan cautiously and with a certain optimism as a whole, but without any euphoria. Two basic approaches may be traced here. On the one hand the appearance on the map of some semblance of a unified state organism is gratifying in itself. There is at least a hope of some, albeit fragile, definite interrepublic structure which has replaced the deceased USSR. On the other, voices expressing doubt as to the legal competence of the formation of the CIS may be heard among the Europeans (in Germany and France, for example).

The following viewpoint is held also: The decision on the proclamation of the CIS was adopted surreptitiously, without official debate in the parliaments of the republics and without referenda and consideration of the interests of the electorate. And, as a German newspaper wrote, what if political leaders of the republics meet in some "other forest" or somewhere else on the expanses of the newborn CIS and proclaim some new state formation?

Political uncertainty in the CIS which has been created is being combined with even greater uncertainty in the military sphere. This is no joking matter for the West—viewing the "removal" by "national headquarters" of the previously unified armed forces, Western experts are rightly seeing this as a threat to the security of all European states.

There are things that are unclear on the question of nuclear control also. The leaders of the republics which are a part of the CIS had, it might have seemed, resolved the problems concerning the "nuclear button." But let us not forget either (and such concern is being displayed by the Americans, in the main) that despite the relative assurances of control over the use of nuclear weapons, the manufacture of these same weapons will, by all accounts, continue in the states of the CIS. But it will not be that simple exercising such control even by collective efforts.

The question confronting Western states currently is obvious: Should they do business with such a formation as the CIS at all, or should they switch to direct bilateral contacts with its constituent parts? The "individual diplomatic activity" of each republic of the former Union would seem to indicate the preferability for the West of the second option.

At the same time, however, fears are even being expressed that the unification of the former republics of the USSR (even if infirm and amorphous) will lead to the inevitable emergence of a new "common" leader (president, general secretary or, if worst comes to worst, some "coordinator extraordinary and plenipotentiary"), with whom the West would have to reckon.

U.S. President G. Bush, it is true, officially declared that, in his opinion, the CIS has replaced the former USSR in earnest and for a long time. A similar hope was expressed also by British Prime Minister J. Major. But it is manifestly premature to speak about some common approach of the states of the West to the formation of the CIS. The formulation of this common position might possibly be served by B. Yeltsin's speech in the UN Security Council with explanations concerning the aims and tasks of the newborn CIS.

In a word, the West's general attitude toward the formation of the CIS may as yet be characterized thus: active temporizing and agonizing interpretation. The leading Western states, viewing the political contradictions dividing the republics of the former Soviet Union, are no less concerned, obviously, about the continuation therein of economic instability: after all, whether we like it or not, the former USSR is for the West, as before, a promising commercial market.

G-7 Rejects 'Fund' for Convertibile Ruble

PM2801142792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 4

[Report by Aleksey Shalnev: "G-7 Ready To Help, But After We Become Members of the IMF"]

[Text] New York—"The transformation of the former Soviet Union's economy will be possible only if the independent states which have emerged in its place cooperate with each other, ensure freedom in trade, and create active and effective administrative structures"—this was the opinion expressed by finance ministers of the G-7 countries who held a one-day conference on Long Island near New York Saturday [25 January].

The conference produced two items of news, if we speak of what might directly affect the former Union: First, the ministers asked the IMF to decide as quickly as possible the question of membership of the IMF and the World Bank for some of the new states. It is a question of Russia, the Baltic countries, Kazakhstan, Armenia, the Ukraine, and Azerbaijan joining international financial organizations as early as this spring.

True, the communique does contain what is, in my view, an important proviso: In order to become members of the IMF and the World Bank, the states "will have to fulfill appropriate conditions." The communique does not specify the conditions, but it is to be assumed that they concern, in particular, the provision of information by the former republics of the Union which will make it possible to determine clearly the true state of affairs in the economy. "This," as London's FINANCIAL TIMES points out, "is a serious problem: the lack of reliable statistical data; the rapid pace of the economic slump; the size of the republics, particularly Russia; the scale of trade among the republics—all this creates difficulties in deciding what the quota must be for each of these countries," in other words how much these countries will have to pay to the IMF by way of their joining fee, because the amount which they will be able to receive from the fund will, in principle, depend on the size of this fee.

The second item of news: The ministers of "the seven" rejected the idea of creating a so-called stabilization fund which, according to our economists' intention, should help to turn the ruble into a convertible currency. In fact, we could have hardly expected anything else: People in the capitals of "the seven" have never particularly concealed the fact that they do not believe in the idea of such a fund and that they prefer to act according to the prescriptions suggested by the IMF itself.

The communique bluntly states: "The economic reforms in the former Soviet Union must be formulated and implemented in close cooperation with the IMF."

Drawing a line under the last two paragraphs of the final communique, it is possible to say the following: The former USSR should not expect any financial—as distinct from humanitarian—assistance from "the seven" until the process of joining international financial organizations is complete.

European Bank Approves Membership for Baltics

OW3001013992 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1855 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Directors of the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development [EBRD] decided in London January 28 to accept the Baltic States as members of the Bank.

Estonian Finance Minister Rein Miller told ETA news agency that his republic must pay an entrance fee of 350,000 U.S. dollars within a month. After paying the fees and presenting concrete programs, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia will be able to get loans for their implementation. The minister said the London meeting displayed particular interest in the problem of citizenship in the Baltics. Miller explained that "EBRD does not give loans to countries violating human rights."

Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan Establishes Ties

LD2901213692 Moscow TASS in English 2112 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Ankara January 29 TASS—Turkey established diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level with the Republics of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, according to the ANATOLIAN NEWS AGENCY from Ankara.

The first ambassador of the Turkish Republic in Azerbaijan will be Altan Karamanoglu, earlier a Turkish consul-general in Baku, the agency reports with the reference to the sources from the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Further on Planned Withdrawal From Poland

PM2901124592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 28 Jan 92 p 3

[Major M. Zheglov report: "We Are Ready To Withdraw the Troops. But Where Can We Station Them?"]

[Text] The last combat units of the Northern Group of Forces will leave Polish territory by 15 November this year. Colonel General V. Dubynin, commander of the group of forces, announced this at a news conference. The schedule is fairly tight, taking into account the fact that, according to Western analysts' figures, more than 75,000 of our ordinary soldiers and officers were stationed in Poland. Taking members of their families and civilian workers into account, this figure rises sharply.

True, since the beginning of 1989, some 28,000 people had already left the Northern Group of Forces. But in any case there is much work to be done. The withdrawal is complicated by the fact that up till now there has been no agreement on this problem, and questions concerning our movable and immovable property being left in this country and compensation for ecological damage which our troops have caused have not been settled.

As I was informed at the embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow, resolving these questions does not depend on the Polish side alone. The main obstacle preventing us from settling all these contentious issues is the fact that we borrowed significant sums for the transit of another group of forces—the western one—through Polish territory. A delegation from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which spent last week in Russia, conducted consultations with the Russian leadership on this problem. We do not know of any specific results for the moment. But judging by several statements by delegation head A. Ananicz, the matter might get under way in the near future.

Whatever the situation there, all combat units of the Northern Group of Forces will leave Polish territory by the set date. But to what degree and in what way are we prepared to station them back in the homeland?

Commonwealth

Next Meeting Scheduled for 7-8 Feb in Moscow

LD2901140892 Moscow TASS in English 1329 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—The next meeting of the Commonwealth heads of state is scheduled for February 7-8 in Moscow, Vladimir Mashitz, chairman of the Russian State Committee for Economic Cooperation with the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member-states, said on Wednesday [29 January].

Mashitz expressed the hope the meeting will help the participants achieve progress in eliminating trade barriers among the CIS states. "They might agree on prices for certain types of produce", he explained.

But the process of eliminating trade barriers will not go smoothly. Although Kazakhstan and Belarus signed an agreement on lifting all limitations in industrial activity, Russia will follow suit in its relations only with those CIS states which are willing to accept three conditions, Mashitz said. The major CIS country will keep the barriers in trade with those former Soviet Republics which introduce their own currency and refuse to carry out a joint export-import and banking policies, he explained.

Baltics

Further on Interparliamentary Assembly

LD2501040592 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2230 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Excerpts] The first session of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Baltic States opened in the Latvian capital, Riga, today. Lithuania is represented by a delegation of 18 members of parliament [MP's]. [passage omitted] The Latvian MP Maris Budovskis was elected chairman of the Presidium of the Baltic Assembly and Aurimas Taurantis a Lithuanian MP, deputy chairman.

The session also approved statutes of the Baltic Assembly. They note in particular that the Interparliamentary Assembly is a consultative body in discussing projects and issues of common interest to all the three Baltic states. After the plenary meeting, work continued in six committees on law; socioeconomic problems; ecology; power engineering; communications; education, culture, and science; and foreign relations. Bronislovas Kuzmickas read Vytautas Landsbergis' greetings message to the session of the Interparliamentary Baltic Assembly.

Assembly Adopts Concluding Recommendations

LD3001103192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 26 Jan 92

[By ELTA special correspondent Romualdas Cesna in Riga]

[Excerpts] The second session of the Baltic Assembly will be held in Vilnius at the beginning of June. This decision was adopted today by the delegations at the first plenary meeting, which ended in Riga today.

The most important forms and directions of cooperation between the Baltic Assembly and the Nordic Council were discussed at the conference. It was projected that joint working groups, cooperation at the presidium committee level, and a comprehensive exchange of information would be established. In particular much attention will be devoted to law legislation.

The concluding document of the first Baltic Assembly session has been adopted. It was signed by Maris Budovskis from Latvia, chairman of the Baltic Assembly Presidium; Aurimas Taurantas from Lithuania, deputy chairman of the Baltic Assembly Presidium; and Ulo Nugis from Estonia, deputy chairman of the Presidium.

In this document the Baltic Assembly presents a recommendation to the Baltic states' parliaments and governments that they consider the expediency of preparing a draft interstate agreement, in order to establish a legal basis for cooperation. [passage omitted including indistinct portions]

The Baltic Assembly adopted an appeal to the president of the Russian Federation and its Supreme Soviet, concerning the complete withdrawal of the Armed Forces under Russian jurisdiction from Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. The one hope is expressed that the negotiations concerning the Army's withdrawal be conducted in an atmosphere of good will and constructiveness. The most important aim of the negotiations is the shortest period and schedule possible for the total withdrawal of the Army—and to withdraw the Army from Baltic state capitals without delay.

The Baltic Assembly has also approved the documents prepared by the committee.

Military

Further Reportage on Black Sea Fleet Situation

Kasatanov, Chernavin Visit Fleet

PM2901105392 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 1

[Report by Captain Second Class V. Pasyakin: "Visit to Black Sea Sailors. Russian President and Commander in Chief of CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces on Cruiser 'Moskva'"]

[Excerpt] Fleet Admiral V. Chernavin, commander of the Navy, arrived at Sevastopol—the Black Sea Fleet's main base—Saturday 25 January. He familiarized himself with Fleet affairs and on 26 January accompanied by Admiral I. Kasatonov, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, and other officials, put to sea in the ASW cruiser "Moskva" for a tactical exercise. Vice Admiral V. Larionov, first deputy commander of the Fleet, reported that the large ASW ship "Kerch" and the escort ship "Bezukoriznennyy" also took part in the exercise. The voyage was part of the Fleet's combat training plan. [passage omitted]

Status 'Cleared Up'

OW2901180592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Admiral Igor Kasatonov, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, has said in an exclusive interviev for IF [INTERFAX] that President Yeltsin's trip to Novorossiysk on Tuesday [28 January] cleared up the Russian leadership's stand on the status and structure of the Navy. The Black Sea Fleet will have the status of a Commonwealth strategic force, and its headquarters and divisions will temporarily retain their present structure.

The admiral quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying, by way of commenting on his own earlier statement (made in Saratov - IF) that the Black Sea Fleet had always been, and would continue to be Russia's: "I spoke historically, not politically."

Admiral Kasatonov refuted the allegations that his Fleet's base might be moved from Sevastopol to Novorossiysk. He said the idea was wrong "from both the political and the military-strategic point of viev."

Financing of Fleet Discussed

LD2901180792 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 29 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] As you know, yesterday the president of Russia was in Novorossiysk where he had a meeting with the Command of the Black Sea Fleet. This visit gave grounds for some observers to suppose that the Black Sea Fleet would leave its main base in Sevastopol and move to Novorossiysk. Rear Admiral Solovyev refuted these hypotheses. The Fleet should not leave Sevastopol, he said, since the fleet belongs to the whole Commonwealth and not to any one republic.

The Black Sea Fleet is a difficult knot in relations between Russia and Ukraine and talks on this issue are currently at an impasse. Our special correspondent has just been to Sevastopol.

[Correspondent A. Denisov] Admiral Kasatonov, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, receives hundreds of letters and telegrams every day from all over the country. Unfortunately, it is virtually impossible to quote them because of their very sharp tone and harsh criticisms of Presidents Kravchuk and Yeltsin. Their main thought is approximately this: Soon the country will have nothing to eat but you are dividing up missile ships.

Russians and Ukrainians are most worried in case the dividing up the Fleet leads to a lengthy conflict between our two republics. However, according to the commander, matters are hardly likely to come to that. At a meeting with journalists Admiral Kasatonov said that today, just as before, the best way to avoid interethnic friction is to keep the Fleet under a united command. The question was asked who is now paying for the upkeep of the Fleet.

[Begin Kasatonov recording] We have received 350 million rubles [R] from Ukraine for the quarter and R250 million from Russia for the month. As the system of financial payments goes through the Ukrbank, Russia's money was frozen. We are now spending the money allocated by Ukraine since it provides coupons, too. But, to tell the truth, I am prepared to spend both lots of money and I would not mind if they gave even more. If there is a third contribution then I shall spend that too. This is all to the benefit of people and they should not care whose money it is. Our Fleet belongs to the Commonwealth and, therefore, they should all finance it and provide for its upkeep. [end recording]

[Denisov] Nonetheless, according to the commander, the breakdown of economic links between Russia and Ukraine has led to a situation in which the commaners of many units of the Fleet have, themselves, for two years now been concerned with purchasing vegetables, meat, and other products in order to have something with which to feed their subordinates. Of course, the officers are doing this to the detriment of their professional duties. This situation is abnormal. Now, in Kasatonov's opinion, the situation can be corrected only by the heads of states of the Commonwealth and, of course, by a clear-cut decision on the fate of the Fleet.

Kasatonov 'Refused' Meeting

LD2901182192 Moscow TASS in English 1618 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By Ukrinform-TASS correspondent Mikhayl Stetsuk]

[Text] The commander of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral Igor Kasatonov, refused on Wednesday [29 January] to meet a group of Ukrainian parliamentarians and officials from the republican Defence Ministry. Kasatonov said it was a surprise visit for him as nobody had informed him about it. The admiral added he was too busy at the moment.

The guests spent an hour and a half out in the cold and decided to visit other Fleet commanders and vessels. But

Rear Admiral Anatoliy Manchenko, first deputy chief of staff of the Fleet, said Kasatonov did not allow any visits.

The deputies then went to discuss the incident with the local authorities of Sevastopol. The parliamentarians arrived at the Black Sea Fleet Headquarters after Russian President Boris Yeltsin had a meeting with Kasatonov.

Report on Ships' Return Denied

LD2901211692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1926 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Yashin]

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)—The report by UKRINFORM correspondents, to the effect that a detachment of ships had not returned to Sevastopol, was denied by Yevgeniy Yaroshenko, the general on duty at the Central Command Post of the Commonwealth of Independent States General Staff. He told a TASS correspondent by telephone that the ships of the Black Sea Fleet that had been in Novorossiysk returned to their base in Sevastopol at 1030 Moscow time today.

Denouement of Oath Swearing

PM2901124192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 28 Jan 92 p 3

[Report by Captain Second Rank V. Pasyakin under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Oaths of Allegiance Sworn in the Black Sea Fleet After All"]

[Text] Sevastopol—It is well known that the situation concerning the oath of allegiance in the Black Sea Fleet was very tense at the beginning of January. The ceremony was postponed until the adoption of political decisions. A quest began for a way out of the conflict situation. A series of meetings and talks at various levels took place. Admiral I. Kasatonov, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, went to Kiev and Moscow. Ukrainian and Russian Supreme Soviet deputies worked in the fleet. The All-Army Officers' Assembly was held in Moscow...

Finally agreements appeared on the oath of military allegiance in the general purpose forces and the oath of military allegiance in the strategic forces. Since the Navy (in accordance with the Minsk agreement) is classed as part of the strategic forces, and the Black Sea Fleet training detachments train specialists for all Fleets, it was decided to swear the strategic forces' oath of military allegiance, the text of which was also signed by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk.

The oath-taking ceremony for young seamen in the Black Sea Fleet training detachments was scheduled for 25 January. Their parents and relatives arrived—in smaller numbers this time, it is true.

"Literally 15 minutes before the start of the solemn ritual—and it was scheduled for 0900 hours—we received instructions to call off this important and long-awaited event," Captain First Rank Tibor Tsvarts, commander of the training detachment, told me. "Once again it had been a 'general' rehearsal... Similar situations have occurred in the Admiral F.S. Oktyabrskiy training detachment and in communications, weapons, and diving schools... In a word, a 'retreat' again..."

But, as it turned out, not for long. The ceremony of swearing the strategic forces' oath of military allegiance was held 26 January. Not absolutely identically everywhere, it is true. Seamen in the submariners' training detachment all swore it, except for two who were on compassionate leave and those who were in hospital or the medical unit. The oath was also sworn by 100 percent of shore-based naval units. The situation is similar in the diving school. Refuseniks in the F.S. Oktyabrskiy training detachment accounted for about 15 percent. This percentage was significantly higher in the Nikolayev Communications School—47 percent.

The oath of allegiance was also sworn by military construction servicemen. Of 325 soldiers, 290 swore no oath at all.

All-Army Coordinating Council Schedules Meeting

OW3001002392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The 125-member Coordinating Council elected at the all-Army conference on January 17 will meet in session at the Central Army House (2, Kommuna Square) on January 30-31.

As IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent has learnt at the Commonwealth Armed Forces Committee's personnel department, the session will discuss the legal status of the Coordinating Council and the package of military issues submitted for debate to the forthcoming Commonwealth summit in Minsk.

The organizers of the Council have invited only military journalists to cover the Council session.

Armed Forces Begin Accreditation of Journalists

OW2901215792 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1819 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Air Force Maj-Gen Nikolay Stolyarov, head of the Commonwealth Armed Forces Committee's Personnel Department, has ordered the beginning of journalists' accreditation at the Committee. This is a move within the Army's program of expanding contacts with the public and giving journalists access to information about the Army and Navy.

The accreditation is being conducted by the Media Department of the Armed Forces Committee. Contact telephone: 293-1838.

Serviceman's Trade Union Holds News Conference

LD2901234492 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1800 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The first news conference of the ISTU [Independent Servicemen's Trade Union] was held in Moscow today. After the meeting with journalists, our correspondent, Ivan Akkuratov had an interview with Captain Andrey Yevgeniyevich Goptar, deputy chairman of the ISTU.

[Akkuratov] Andrey Yevgeniyevich, the name of your trade union states that it is independent. From whom or from what is it independent? Could you explain this.

[Goptar] The trade union is independent first and foremost from state bodies, economic and administrative bodies, military command bodies, public organizations and political parties. In no case will anyone impose their will on the trade union. It will be guided only by the will of the members of the trade union.

The main goal is the consolidation of the actions of the servicemen themselves in the defense of their social and economic, professsional, legal, and intellectual rights and interests, and the mutual support of servicemen. The trade union will deal with problems of social insurance. The trade union will deal with problems of cooperating with all interested public organizations and movements which function in the interest of servicemen and also foreign trade unions of servicemen of which to date we know 15.

[Akkuratov] From which sources will the ISTU be financed?

[Goptar] Naturally, the Trade Union has not received and will not receive a single kopeck from the Ministry of Defense. It appears to us that the financing of the trade union will be effected via two channels. The first channel is the receipt of members' dues—90 percent of which will remain in the primary organizations of the trade union. And the second channel is the setting up and development of our own commercial structures in order to obtain material resources to implement aims or tasks.

[Akkuratov] What is the legal basis of the Servicemen's Trade Union?

[Goptar] The legal basis of the trade union today, inasmuch as Union legislation no longer exists, is the Constitution of the Russian Federation; international norms, namely the universal declaration of human rights adopted by the UN General Assembly and confirmed by our state among others; various conventions; international pacts; and other legal documents in keeping with which the activity of the trade union is legal. There are no restrictions for servicemen as was the case when servicemen were duped over 74 years: there are no restrictions or prohibitions of any kind.

Turkestan Commander Interviewed on District

PM3001095392 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 1

[Interview with Colonel General G. Kondratyev, commander of the Turkestan Military District, by A. Orlov; place and date not given: "With Faith in Reason"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] We are already accustomed to the most diverse transformations in our state and social structure. But each new rumor frightens us nonetheless. Particularly when it concerns the military sphere. One such disturbing news item reached me on my latest assignment: It seems the days of the Turkestan Military District—the largest in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]—are numbered. Thus alarmed, I went to meet the district commander.

[Orlov] Georgiy Grigoryevich, your district, unlike others, is nowadays "overlooked" by the press. There is no shooting here, everything is quiet, and in these times this is deemed to be satisfactory. But what are the facts? How would you describe the situation in the region, primarily the military-political situation?

[Kondratyev] Our district covers the territories of five sovereign states at once—this says a lot for a start. Today each republic has enough different problems of its own, but like everywhere else in the former Union, military problems occupy a very central position. Yes, it is quiet in our district, but this does not mean that everything is coming along real fine. Today each republic is objectively elaborating its military policy and affirming its sovereignty through an appropriate military structure. Kazakhstan, for example. For the time being the leadership here has not announced the transfer of units on its territory to the republic's jurisdiction, the president's and government's position is carefully considered. But at the same time they want to have a single military chief on Kazakh territory who will reporting to the committee chairman for the republic's defense affairs, the president, and only then to the commander in chief of the CIS Armed Forces. What concerns me here is that the district will "drop out" of this system entirely. Kyrgyzstan is adopting roughly the same position. The units on its territory are subordinated both to the republic and the military command of the formation stationed in Alma-Ata. In Uzbekistan all units and combined units that do not form part of the strategic forces have been taken under the jurisdiction of the republic. They report through the minister for defense affairs and the president to the CIS main command. The position of the republic's leadership in Tajikistan is unequivocal: We will not be creating armed forces, what there is is sufficient. In Turkmenistan the position has also been carefully considered—the units stationed here are geared to be subordinate both to the republic leadership and the CIS forces leadership.

At the same time, the command and control system of the region's troops and their material and technical supply that has been developed over the years is seemingly being done away with.

[Orlov] Are certain difficulties arising because of this?

[Kondratyev] Difficulties of all kinds. And very appreciable ones. Primarily from the military-professional point of view. Something could have been sacrificed here, but not the command and control of units. We military men have always striven for centralization of command and control.

[Orlov] It has been stressed on several occasions that carving up the Army—instead of reforming it—is fraught with all sorts of problems. Today, when people's attention is riveted more to other regions, is something irreparable likely to happen in Central Asia?

[Kondratyev] Basically, the All-Army Officers' Assembly which everyone remembers should force the states' leaders to ponder the danger of playing around with the Armed Forces. Primarily the danger for the Commonwealth's defense capability, which many people just seem to be forgetting about nowadays.

[Orlov] Incidentally, today one can hear it said that the CIS's southern borders do not really need defending...

[Kondratyev] In recent years many people have been attempting to instill precisely this attitude in us. But you only have to look at the map to realize that the neighboring regions have always been a tension generator; the interests of too many powers intersect here.

[Orlov] I have noticed, Georgiy Grigoryevich, that you are an advocate of very carefully considered assessments. Clearly, nowadays a district's commander has to specialize not just in military matters...

[Kondratyev] You mean I have to be a diplomat as well? Indeed, I do not favor extreme appraisals of everything that is happening in our region. Moreover, I believe that reasonable approaches must triumph. It is not easy to conduct politics here. Remember Sukhov: "The Orient is a subtle thing..." This applies to the future of both the Armed Forces and the district.

Economic

Official Backs Privatization of Oil Industry

PM2801152192 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 92 p 2

[Article by V. Neverov, president of the "Germes" firm: "What You Can See in the Oil Well"]

[Text] Russian experts say that 460 million tonnes of oil will be produced this year on the territory of the former USSR; CIA experts expect no more than 425 million tonnes but, according to the "Germes" firm's analysis service, a fall in production to 400-410 million tonnes is most likely. If that happens, Russia will have to stop exporting oil altogether and, naturally, make major cuts in imports, including food imports. Moreover, Russia will have to start importing oil in the second half of 1992.

Oil wells that could be producing 300,000 tonnes of oil per year are going out of production every day. Very large capital investments are needed to bring them back on stream. The fuel and energy complex spent decades robbing the other sectors: In 1986-1989 nearly 40 percent of all capital investments in industry vanished into this bottomless pit. What were such vast sums spent on, how, and by whom? First and foremost, the budget fed the Ministry of the Petroleum and Gas Industry, which controlled 97 percent of oil production. The value of the sector's capital rose to 120 billion rubles [R], although this capital was decades short of world standards at the moment it was commissioned: Two-thirds of the drilling rigs operating in 1991 were designed in the fifties!

This year there is not enough money to finance the oil sector—the deficit will be around R30 billion. The money can only be found at the expense of a drop in living standards, which are at danger level as it is. Moreover, investments from the state budget are not going to change things for the better in themselves.

The entire production chain, from oil prospecting to gasoline pump, has been disrupted; the entire oil refining industry is using hopelessly obsolete equipment. We obtain 63 percent of the light fractions, while the Americans get 90 percent; nearly 37 percent of the petroleum products in our country are fuel oil, whereas in the United States it is only one-fifth as much. We are using budget appropriations to heat our stoves! Anyway, soon there will be nothing to refine. Given our technology and even with optimum conditions, we can get only around 35 percent of the oil from the reserves in West Siberian fields. With intensive production this proportion falls to 27 percent, and there have been cases where a field has been exhausted when only 9-10 percent has been recovered!

Oil extraction in our country is sheer depredation. The petroleum gas burns in flares, the oil stays in the ground, and the natural environment perishes due to the backward technology... There never has been an economic lever that would prevent the predators from taking just the tasty morsels and discarding the rest.

A tonne of oil for a long time cost the purely symbolic sum of R24-26. Last year it started costing R70, which is just as ridiculous when you consider that the world market price is $130-150. A further fivefold increase in the price would not solve the problem either: On the exchanges oil is being bought for R3,000-7,000, and it does not end there...

It is a truism that ultralow oil prices do not encourage thrift. All over the world the energy component of the national product is dwindling all the time, whereas here it is constantly increasing. We have the data of the latest official studies of industry in the United States, Britain, and Japan. Oil refining is the only sector that is directly linked to all other sectors. It is no accident that such studies were for a long time inaccessible to the general public—they were carried out by military economic services for the purpose of establishing what sector to target first. Obviously, that sector is oil refining, because you cannot produce any goods at all without its products. In Britain, for instance, in order to produce sausage worth $10 (for convenience's sake we will use U.S. currency, since it is universal) you have to use almost 14 cents' worth of oil and gas. In the United States, in order to produce livestock products worth $1 million you have to use oil and gas worth $41,727, to produce furniture worth $1 million you have to use oil worth $26,300, and so on. As for us, we are using up far more oil and gas.

Media

TASS Carries Press Review for 29 Jan

LD2901061492 Moscow TASS in English 0536 GMT 29 Jan 92

["Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—Today's newspapers highlight the Middle East conference which has opened in Moscow in continuation of the Madrid and Washington rounds of the settlement of the situation in that explosive area. The press gives accounts of the speeches delivered at the conference by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on behalf of the two countries, which are co-chairmen of the meeting. Newspapers stress that they both expect the Moscow conference to become another step on the way to undoing the knot of Middle East problems. Newspapers also give accounts of other reports at the conference. Summing up the results of the first day of the conference, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA writes that the talks are going to be difficult.

Newspapers cover President Boris Yeltsin's trip to Novorossiysk, where he visited the Moskva anti-submarine cruiser and met there commanders and representatives of the personnel of the Black Sea Fleet. He is accompanied in this trip by Air Force Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

PRAVDA carries an open letter of a group of writers to Russian President Yeltsin, in which they urge him to take immediately effective measures, primarily in the economic sphere, and to pursue a policy of stabilisation of the situation in Russia.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA reprints in an abridged form an article from INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, written by Melvin Feygen, former director of the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe, who points to some mistakes, made, in his opinion, by the Russian leadership in the implementation of the economic reform. "The basic mistake of the Yeltsin regime is that the radical changing of the correlation of prices and incomes, as well as measures aimed at achieving free convertibility of the rouble, became its first steps on the way to a market-oriented economy," he writes. Feygen believes that instead of it, the old money should have been replaced with a new domestic currency unit. After that incomes of the population should have been raised, and enterprises privatised. A gradual growth of prices should be allowed only after goods begin to be produced in sufficient volumes.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA comments on the statement, made by Ukrainian President Kravchuk, in which he asked to give him additional powers. According to the newspaper, this demarche of the Ukrainian president "will hardly satisfy the opposition. It will probably intensify its pressure on the president, who took under his protection the government, which does not suit the opposition."

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA carries an interview with Aleksandr Yevtushenko, former director of the Raspadskaya coal mine (the Kuznetsk coal field) and now Russian deputy minister of fuel and energy development. He points to the need for an equitable dialogue between the government and representatives of the working class, specifically, miners.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries a large interview with Gennadiy Burbulis, secretary of state of the Russian Federation and first deputy chairman of the government. It deals with the main directions of the Russian Government's activities. The newspaper desciribes Burbulis as "a politician of an emphatically attacking type, who makes a breakthrough, removes obstacles and clears the road."

Newspapers continue to give wide coverage to the developments in the Transcaucasian region. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA publishes an interview with South Ossetian Prime Minister Znaur Gassiyev. He stressed that "neither Georgians, nor Ossetians need the escalation of the conflict. We can and should live in peace, and the memory of what has happened will help prevent similar developments in the future."

According to the press, the situation in Georgia continues to be complicated. Newspapers point out that whereabouts of ousted President Gamsakhurdia continue to be unknown. Clashes are reported to have taken place near the city of Poti (the Black Sea coast) between supporters and opponents of the ousted president.

Press Review for 30 Jan

LD3001101592 Moscow TASS in English 0718 GMT 30 Jan 92

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 30 ITAR-TASS—Today's press highlights a statement by President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation "On Russia's Policy on the Limitation and Reduction of Weapons" dated January 29, 1992. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA runs the full text of the statement and other newspapers summarise the document.

The Army newspaper KRASNAYA ZVEZDA frontpages a summary of the statement under the headline "Boris Yeltsin: Russia Is Committed to the Nuclear Arms Reduction Policy."

The statement has it that Russia regards itself as the successor to the Soviet Union in the domain of responsibility for fulfilling international obligations and that the leadership of Russia reaffirms its commitment to the policy of radical nuclear arms cuts.

"George Bush: The United States Intends To Expedite the Modification of the Pattern of Its Strategic Forces" is the headline of an article on the U.S. President's traditional "State of the Union" address in Congress on January 28, in which the U.S. President enumerated a number of arms reduction measures being planned by his administration in view of the U.S. "triumph" in the Cold War.

"Yeltsin has deepened what Gorbachev launched," KOSMOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA writes in this connection. Emphasising the need to slash military spending, the newspaper points out: "Although the statement does mention the adoption of decisions on the basis of reciprocity, a large part of the statement deals with unilateral measures. Who can tell, whether we, maybe, would have lived differently nowadays if Gorbachev decided to resort to such steps earlier?"

"Following Russian President Boris Yeltsin's statement, a new and, perhaps, final 'non-nuclear blow' has been dealt to the United States," NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observes.

"On the eve of his trip to New York, the Russian president came forward with the most radical proposals on reduction and elimination of nuclear (both tactical and strategic) and conventional arms," the newspaper notes.

In a PRAVDA interview, Russia' Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy said the country is now not just in a state of crisis but in a political, economic, and social impasse as well. Rutskoy sees the cause of this in both the outcome of the activities of the government of "the socialist past" and in "awkward attempts to rectify the position of the government of 'the democratic present', who are guided only by 'theorisings by individual politicians and economists."

Rutskoy perceives a serious threat in the fact that the disintegration of the Soviet Union has entailed a respective chain reaction within the framework of Russia and other sovereign republics that have become members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

This process can be stopped only by an economic revival. However, the activities of the present Russian Government do not give grounds for optimistic forecasts, the vice president believes.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Leonid Kravchuk, the president of Ukraine, who speaks on topics of Ukraine's statehood and the future of the CIS. He reiterates his thesis that the new Commonwealth will continue to exist if all member-countries are equal, respect one another, not encroach on one another's independence, no one lays claim to diktat and no one considers us part of their land or their people. Otherwise, the CIS cannot be strong, Kravchuk maintains.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) reports that the 14th Army of the Armed Forces of the former Soviet Union, which is now part of the Odessa Military District (Ukraine), will be transferred to the CIS Armed Forces. The army is quartered on the territory of the Republic of Moldova near Tiraspol (the Dnestr area) and is under operational subordination to the Odessa Military District, the military units of which have now become part of the national armed forces of Ukraine.

"Any state, as long as it exists and irrespective of what hard a situation it may find itself in, is in need of an intelligence service," Leonid Shebarshin, former chief of the KGB's First Main Directorate, told KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA.

He believes that the role of an intelligence service grows during difficult period." "Such service may suggest the only right way for getting out of a hard situation, the way which at first glance is not so easy to find," Shevarshin said.

"The working people have no grounds to hope for an improvement of their living conditions soon," Arkadiy Solovyov, secretary of the Federation of the Independent Trade Unions of Russia, told RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA.

Touching upon the non-planned pricerise, the trade union leader described it as the main cause why "the state followed the lead of monopoly enterprises." In addition, he believes, the state has decided to resolve budgetary problems and replenish the budget revenue to the utmost at the expense of the people.

Georgia does not intend to set up large armed forces and considers it advisable to join a collective security system of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Lieutenant General Levan Sharashenidze, minister of defence of the Republic of Georgia, said in an interview with KRASNAYA ZVEZDA.

"We do not intend to raise some large army," the minister said. He is convinced that the republic's foreign policy should be aimed at living in friendship and accord with all countries on which it borders, primarily with Russia.

America wants to regard Russia as its ally, Brigadier General Gregory G. Govan, a Pentagon representative and defence attache at the U.S. Embassy in Russia, told KRASNAYA ZVEZDA.

The United States does not seek or try to use the temporary difficulties in Russia to achieve one-sided advantages, emphasised the U.S. general, who has devoted almost 25 years to the study of the Soviet Union.

Almost 70 percent of Muscovites have cut down expenses on meals, medical treatment, and spare time activities, writes NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the strength of the findings of an opinion poll taken by the Public Opinion Study Centre of Moscow University.

The newspaper points out that 80 per cent of respondents anticipate mass unrest if the state of things with the supply of food and goods does not change for the better in the foreseeable future.

Among major international events, newspapers single out the Moscow round of the Middle East peace talks and other developments connected with the Middle East process, and run reports from Yugoslavia, Nicaragua, Algeria, and El Salvador, foreign comments on the state of affairs in the CIS, and economic news.

Yeltsin Begins First Tour Abroad

Yeltsin Comments on Nuclear Initiatives

LD3001070892 Moscow TASS in English 0653 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow January 30 TASS—President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation today set out on a tour abroad, during which he will visit Britain, the United States and Canada.

In a brief talk with journalists at Moscow airport before departure, the president said that Russia's partners for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) "agree in principle with the fact that the targeting of our strategic nuclear missiles has been changed and that the United States is no longer viewed as the chief adversary".

One of the purposes of the initiatives proposed on Wednesday [29 January], Yeltsin said, is to persuade the United States into abandoning the Strategic Defence Initiative programme and into participating in the establishment of a global space-based security system.

In response to a question from the ITAR-TASS correspondent, Yeltsin said the drafts of the initiatives in the field of disarmament had been sent out in advance to CIS countries and to U.S. President George Bush.

The heads of CIS member-states will discuss these initiatives in detail in Minsk on February 14, Yeltsin said.

BBC Airs Interview With Yeltsin

LD3001143392 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by correspondent David Dimbleby in Russia on 29 January; Yeltsin in Russian with superimposed English translations; from the "Newsnight" program—recorded]

[Text] [Dimbleby] Mr. President, you, today, have announced a speeding up of the abolition of nuclear weaponry in Russia. Are you acting faster all the time in response to pressure from the West in return for economic help?

[Yeltsin] No. It isn't connected directly with aid from the West; especially, as nobody from the West has placed any such conditions on Russia. It is our own policy, our own position, that we should change our vocabulary and stop talking about potential enemies—Britain, NATO, and the U.S.—and instead, start talking about mutual cooperation, or perhaps, an alliance between us. Therefore, there must be real trust between us, there must be a frank and open relationship. We have a new Russia, a democratic Russia, which must build democratic and honest relations with all its partners.

[Dimbleby] If it's not under pressure, is it an equal reduction or is Russia reducing faster than the United States?

[Yeltsin] Now that's for the specialists and the experts. You have to take into account that it was only today at 4 A.M., Moscow time, that President Bush announced his initiative, and I only made my announcement at nine o'clock. A difference of five hours. It's now up to the experts to make the detailed comparisons; well, there is a certain difference in the interpretation of our proposals, but, still, the positions are close. Perhaps, the only point on which there might be disagreement is that of naval bases.

[Dimbleby] Will you find that if you want to go ahead with the speeding up of from seven to three years of the start of reductions that that would actually need, require, American money and knowledge to achieve?

[Yeltsin] Yes, since there are a number of issues connected with the destruction of nuclear weapons, especially with the use of plutonium 239 and uranium 235. They shouldn't simply be stored, but utilized somehow. Our specialists have invented the technology for this so that it can be used as fuel for fast neutron power stations, and not for nuclear weapons. That's especially important. Of course, we have to work together to develop the technology, as I told Secretary of State Baker today.

[Dimbleby] Just so I understand it clearly, are you saying you'll consider George Bush's proposals that Russia eliminate all nuclear missiles on land? Are you going to consider that as a serious proposal—the multi-warhead missiles?

[Yeltsin] Well, unquestionably, these proposals must be taken seriously, especially by such an important partner. We can't call the United States a potential enemy anymore. They are no longer a potential enemy. They are a partner in cooperation. However, these proposals are serious in themselves and they must be looked at with regard to all three armed forces; that is land, air, and sea forces. Overall, we will have to get our priorities right, but we will be prepared to make exceptions for some types of weapons.

[Dimbleby] You said that you're no longer targeting American cities. Is the same true of British cities? Are you no longer targeting British cities?

[Yeltsin] Well, I'm flying to London tomorrow, and we shall discuss that question with Mr. Major.

[Dimbleby] You want to tell him, not us?

[Yeltsin] I think that this must be a mutual process, and, therefore, we shall have to discuss it.

[Dimbleby] But, when you say a mutual process, as you know, Britain is replacing Polaris with Trident submarines, possibly with more warheads. Would this stand in the way of anything you might say about targeting Britain?

[Yeltsin] I must, just, say that we have been talking about this with the United States, with Mr. Baker, today. We're looking to France, to Britain, and China, to review the Russian and American initiatives, and then, perhaps, we will amend them. We don't want Britain to go back to the path it has followed for many, many decades. We don't want to consider Britain as a potential enemy again. We want Britain, ultimately, to become an ally. That's our main aim. We shall sign a declaration, then an agreement, and then form an alliance. We want to enter Europe, we want to be a full-blooded member of the European Community, of the world community. That's why we think it's a good idea to build up special global defense forces together and to work together on space programs to replace Star Wars; forces that can be used jointly—then if anything happens, either accidentally or deliberately, a nuclear strike for example, we could deal with it immediately. And that's despite the fact Russia is a potential opponent of the United States, Britain, and other European countries.

[Dimbleby] But, you took the first step with America, you said we're not, any longer, going to target American cities. You're not prepared to say the same about Britain, to me, now?

[Yeltsin] You see, that is still a difficult question technically. Yes, we can change the targets of missiles, and we can do that as soon as those, which are subject to the declarations which Mr. Bush and I made this morning, have been dismantled. We want to change the targets of those remaining missiles so that they are no longer aimed at America. I think that we will be able to come to a similar agreement with Mr. Major.

[Dimbleby] If America and Britain and Europe, then, are no longer targets, why does Russia need nuclear weapons at all?

[Yeltsin] Well, there are countries like Iraq. What if Iraq acquired a nuclear bomb or a nuclear missile? It might launch it at the Soviet Union, which is closer. For that reason, for reasons of restraint, we need a definite number of missiles. We're not talking about 5, 6, 10, 12, or 14,000 strategic warheads, but about 2,500 at the most. In other words, a several fold reduction.

[Dimbleby] There's great concern in the West about the control of nuclear weapons, and everybody has heard what you've said about joint control, the Commonwealth control of these weapons, but can they really be certain that the other republics, that form the Commonwealth, will also agree?—That the Ukraine, that Khazakhstan, that Belarus, will go along with these accords? And until they do, isn't there a serious risk of the weapons being in the wrong hands?

[Yeltsin] Yes. From a technical point of view, it is impossible to control them. A document has been signed in Alma-Ata by all four nuclear powers; that is Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus, and Khazakhstan, stating that control is in the hands of the president of Russia and secondarily, those of Marshal Shaposhnikov, the supreme commander of Commonwealth Forces. But, there must be a link-up between the four heads of state. We must take a political decision immediately on whether to use nuclear weapons or not—God forbid that we should use them, and everybody must be in agreement.

[Dimbleby] I know that, Mr. President, but I'm thinking not of the structures that you've set up, but of the danger the people see of political disruption and chaos. Your sudden visit to the Black Sea, for instance, the feelings that the Ukraine has toward Russia, that these things may create an instability and may end up with some of these weapons being in the wrong hands.

[Yeltsin] On the contrary, our visit to the Black Sea Fleet was linked to discussions of how to disarm the 30 percent of the Black Sea Fleet that carries nuclear weapons. They have to be stored in Russia, and destroyed in Russia. These are very complicated, technical questions. One thing I can say is that there is no danger, at present, of the uncontrolled use of nuclear weapons. It is impossible for any one country to control these weapons. It is technically impossible without the go ahead from the other countries.

[Dimbleby] One other thing that worries people about nuclear weapons is them getting into the wrong hands. Not these republics, but into the hands of, perhaps, people within the Russian Federation, of information being sold, of material being sold. That's just as powerful a concern as the control of actual nuclear missiles. Is there anything you can do, or you would like the West to do, to try and make sure that that doesn't happen?

[Yeltsin] Yes. Firstly, three countries, apart from Russia, well, that is the Ukraine, Belarus, and Khazakhstan, must also sign the agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states. That's very important. Secondly, the brain drain. Recently, I had a five-hour meeting with nuclear scientists and technicians at which all these question were discussed in detail. There are about 3,000 of these specialists, they're very talented people, and strenuous efforts must be made to look after them. I intend to raise their current salaries of 800 to 1,000 rubles to 5,000 rubles to keep them here.

[Dimbleby] You think you can keep them here in Russia? You think you can find a way of doing that?

[Yeltsin] Yes, of course. For example, if we reach an agreement with the United States and, perhaps, Britain, to create a joint global system of nuclear defense in space, in place of Star Wars, we'll be able to find jobs for all of them.

[Dimbleby] Reassurances you're going to give and are giving about nuclear weapons are, of course, a precondition for economic assistance from the West. I want to ask you this: How vital is it for Russia, at this moment, that it does have aid help—money from the West?

[Yeltsin] I want to repeat, once again, that this is not connected with financial assistance from the West. It is, in any case, our policy to speed up the reduction of our nuclear weapons.

[Dimbleby] It's what Chancellor Kohl has said, that aid won't come, and they're the biggest benefactors at the moment, unless there is security and observance of nuclear treaties. Not me that's saying it.

[Yeltsin] I know what you're saying. But let's look at the situation a little differently: What if our reforms fail and conservative forces come to power in Russia? The secret police would go back to the old ways, they would restart an arms race with Britain, the United States, and the other nuclear powers, and that would cost the taxpayer hundreds, thousands of millions of dollars—hundreds of time more than it would cost now to insure that our reforms are not stifled. That is the standpoint from which we should look at the problem.

[Dimbleby] But is the aid vital to you in the sense that your finance minister, Mr. Gaydar, said that there would be mass starvation. I quote from TRUD: There would be mass starvation in March if Western credit dried up.

[Yeltsin] Well, of course. In any case, the decisive voice here must be ours, and when we approach these problems, we will be looking to our own resources first. And we know that the bulk of the burden falls on our shoulders. Nevertheless, Western aid will, to some extent, ameliorate the negative consequences, especially of price liberalization, and extend the government's credit in the eyes of the people. It will enable us to avoid explosions in the next few months.

[Dimbleby] Do you believe that the West is demonstrating sufficient imagination, at the moment in providing aid, and enough generosity, and is doing it at sufficient speed?

[Yeltsin] They haven't been imaginative enough with regard to the amount and in the way it's being handled, but the United States is setting a good example. From 10 February, a massive airlift will begin using 54 large transport aircraft to bring food aid here over a period of 14 days. I think that's a good example for Britain and others to follow.

[Dimbleby] Do the Russian people resent the West being called on to provide this help for their country? Do they resent it when George Bush says, as he said yesterday, we won the Cold War, and that, in a sense, Russia is now dependent?

[Yeltsin] Firstly, it was not the United States alone, but all of us together who won the Cold War. Secondly, what is the attitude of our people to aid; especially humanitarian aid? We have explained to our people that, yes, Russia is a great power and that it is awkward for us to accept such aid, especially humanitarian. But, we have told them that when such aid comes from the grass roots, from the people themselves, and that the British, French, and Americans sincerely want to help us, as well as the Japanese, the Canadians, and so on, then, in fact, it would be awkward to refuse that aid when it is given with a pure heart, when they want to help us during this difficult period of transition to a market economy. We've talked about this for seven years, and at last we have made a start, but, of course, our difficulties are enormous.

[Dimbleby] You yourself, Mr. President, have been very critical, in the Russian Parliament, about the way the reforms are going. You say they're going too slowly, you say privatization isn't working. What is it that's gone wrong here with the reforms that you've introduced? Why isn't it beginning to come through?

[Yeltsin] You see, for 70 years or more, people have grown up, lived, worked under a political dogma, a communist dogma, a totalitarian one. And psychologically, it isn't easy for them to make the transition to private property, to privatization.

[Dimbleby] But how do you persuade them to change? Because, you talk about people obstructing you, you talk about the mafia, you talk about old [word indistinct] of the Communist Party. Can you move all these people? Can you change their way of thinking?

[Yeltsin] I signed two orders today to speed up the privatization process, and they spell out the responsibility of those involved. I also signed an order today on freedom of trade: Every citizen and every organization can trade freely now, when and as they like, without asking permission. That will give a great boost to privatization. We're counting on that.

[Dimbleby] A decree is a decree. In the end, these things depend on the Russian people; changing their attitude. It depends on you removing people who, as you say, are trying to obstruct you, trying to prevent you doing this. Is that possible to do?

[Yeltsin] We do remove those who are obstructive, and there are many examples in the provinces and the republics where things aren't going badly, where they're going well, in fact. I have just visited Lower (?Assisk) in the Krasnodar region, where land reform is doing very well. There are already 5,500 private farms there. They're tackling other questions, as well, and they're addressing their problems with great vigor. They have already destroyed, that is dissolved, state control of trade, shops have been given their own licenses, and privatization is going ahead. And so, it's clear to us from all this that the foundations have been laid.

[Dimbleby] But it's you that I am quoting. It's you who said that privatization has gone wrong, only 10 days ago in parliament.

[Yeltsin] Undoubtedly, not everything has gone the way we wanted or as fast as we would have liked; I spoke about that today. Nevertheless, we're taking measures and we're optimistic that in the end we shall solve our problems, although we are a little late by about five years.

[Dimbleby] You have opposition, here, from the central bank, from parliament; if you find yourself impeded by those forces, would you be prepared to take more direct control of affairs here? Some people talk about wise authoritarianism of the president actually ruling, entirely, without the constraints of parliament.

[Yeltsin] No. I am a democrat, and we shall find answers to all our problems through consultation. Consultation with parliament, with the Supreme Soviet, and with other institutions.

[Dimbleby] If you find, because you do face this opposition, that they are actually standing in your way, what can you do? How do you appeal? One has this impression of you with all these forces against you both of the old Communist Party, and in parliament, and out in the countryside, that there are a whole lot of forces ranged against you, and I don't understand how you, as one man, can overcome this.

[Yeltsin] Only through discussion, through constant political consultations, which I'm now holding with all the parties and all the groupings. It's you who are talking totalitarian leadership.

[Dimbleby] You wouldn't want to use authoritarian methods?

[Yeltsin] No.

[Dimbleby] You said that within six to eight months things would improve. If they don't improve then and you're not prepared to take further powers, would you stand down?

[Yeltsin] My powers are sufficient and I try not to talk about such pessimistic forecasts. I believe that things will work out and that by the end of year we shall be coping with the new prices and the economy will gradually begin to stabilize.

[Dimbleby] One last question. People in the West worry sometimes about what they see as your impetuous nature and your occasional ill health. Are you fit, now, to sustain the growing pressures that you're going to be under over this next period?

[Yeltsin] When you work for 18 or 20 hours a day and play tennis, as I do, what do you expect? Where on earth do you get such provocative, speculative questions from?

[Dimbleby] And the impetuosity of your character, which is also cited?

[Yeltsin] Perhaps there's some truth in that, but I'll mellow with age.

Responds to UK Journalists

LD3001124492 Moscow TASS in English 1132 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] London January 30 ITAR-TASS—Upon arriving at the airport here today, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin expressed gratitude to Prime Minister John Major for the invitation to visit Britain.

In response to journalists' questions, Yeltsin said that statements issued in the United States and Russia on plans to reduce nuclear arsenals concern primarily the two countries. But subsequently, he emphasised, "we call on nuclear powers—Britain, France and China—to follow suit."

Touching upon the forthcoming talks in London, the Russian president emphasised that they would deal primarily with the utilisation of untapped resources of bilateral cooperation.

After Russia has cast off the fetters, took a civilised road of development and is joining the world community, it needs cooperation as never before with such countries as Britain, "with which we have been trading for centuries," he said.

Yeltsin favoured the development of cooperation in all spheres, "the more so as the necessary potential for this is available."

Gaydar Accompanies Yeltsin on UK, U.S. Tour

LD3001092992 Moscow TASS in English 0844 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow January 30 TASS—The economic priorities of the beginning tour of Britain, the United States and Canada by President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation are to discuss the financial aspects of Russia's cooperation with the world community, Yegor Gaydar, the Russian Government's deputy head in charge of economic policy and the minister of economics and finance, told journalists at Moscow Airport. He is accompanying the Russian president in his tour abroad.

The president will discuss in particular the fate of the banks of the former Soviet Union abroad, such as, for example, the London-based Moscow Narodny Bank, Gaydar said.

The question of the granting of additional credits will not be touched upon. However, the delegation hopes to discuss details of Russia's accession to the International Monetary Fund, some aspects of the delivery of grain to the country and matters connected with interest payments, he added.

In response to journalists' questions about the utilisation of credits that had already been granted by the West, Gaydar said they were being used for the purchase of U.S. and Canadian grain.

The deputy premier emphasised that food aid being given within the framework of the credits was being shared among CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member-states in line with agreements reached by them.

However, a number of former republics of the Soviet Union do not fulfil their obligations. In this connection appropriate adjustments have to be made, he said.

Asked about the possibility of an increase in the prices of oil in view of the rising cost of Ukraine-produced coal, Gaydar said it was planned to increase the amounts of this energy carrier sold at free prices.

Russia's deputy premier voiced conviction that the disarmament initiatives set out by Boris Yeltsin on Wednesday [29 January] would make it possible to substantially ease the country's budget burden.

Yeltsin Meets With Britain's John Major

WA3001153392

For London PRESS ASSOCIATION reportage on the visit by President Boris Yeltsin to the United Kingdom, including reports on his talks with Prime Minister John Major, please see the United Kingdom section of the 30 January West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

International Affairs

Yeltsin, Baker Discuss Bush Proposals

LD2901120892 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 29 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has just ended in the Kremlin's Yekaterinskiy Hall. Greeting the head of the U.S. foreign policy department, the Russian president noted the political far-sightedness of James Baker, who was bold enough to receive Boris Yeltsin before he became president. Yeltsin also voiced satisfaction in connection with the U.S. president's proposal on nuclear arms cuts.

Their conversation concentrated on problems of bilateral relations, preparations for Boris Yeltsin's visit to the United States, and the topics for the forthcoming talks with President George Bush.

Discuss 'Far-Reaching' Reductions

OW3001001192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1715 GMT 29 Jan 92

[From "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "I am satisfied with the proposals U.S. President George Bush made in his yesterday's State of the Union address. They are aimed at drastic reductions in nuclear armaments," Russian President Boris Yeltsin said at the beginning of his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker today (January 29). Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev also took part in the meeting.

After the meeting Mr. Kozyrev and Mr. Baker held a news conference. President Yeltsin had by then left because, according to Mr. Kozyrev, he had to get ready for his forthcoming visit to Great Britain, the USA and Canada. (One of the journalists said Mr. Yeltsin was "looking pale" during the meeting.)

Mr. Baker said he had discussed with Mr. Yeltsin a wide range of matters, some of which concerned the Russian President's forthcoming meeting with President George Bush in Camp David on February 1. They also spoke about the economic programme of the Russian government and nuclear security.

The Antinuclear Proposals of George Bush and Boris Yeltsin

Mr. Baker said the proposals set forth by both presidents in addresses to their nations had been extensively discussed by both sides. But they implied both bilateral and unilateral measures, which was why both sides should carefully study them and discuss them at various levels.

The Secretary of State described the proposals as "far-reaching." He said they reflected new developments in both countries.

The ABM Treaty and SDI

The USA, Mr. Baker said, was fulfilling its commitments under the ABM Treaty. He mentioned this to the leaders of CIS member states during his meetings with them, trying to persuade them to stick to every previously signed agreement, including the ABM Treaty, the treaty on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the treaty on the reduction of nuclear tests.

Mr. Baker thought there still existed a threat of nuclear attack from some states, which was why a space defence programme was essential for the USA.

Judging by what Mr. Kozyrev said in this connection, Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Baker also discussed the possibility of Russia's being incorporated in the U.S. space antinuclear defence programme and other joint research and development programmes and projects.

Who Will The U.S. Missiles Be Aimed At?

In connection with Mr. Yeltsin's recent statement to the effect that Russian strategic missiles would no longer be aimed at targets on U.S. territory, Mr. Kozyrev said this was a politicial decision of the leadership of democratic Russia. "We do not regard the United States as an enemy, and therefore our missiles are not intended for strikes at civilian or military targets on U.S. territory," he said.

According to Mr. Kozyrev, this is the first time in history that such proposals have not been a propaganda exercise but have been intended for real cooperation.

He said the sides had decided to discuss technical ways of carrying out the proposals. There would be more concrete discussions in Camp David, whereupon the matter would be transferred to experts from both countries.

Whether U.S. missiles would still be aimed at targets on Russian territory or not would, Mr. Baker said, be discussed by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin in Camp David. A political decision should be taken to this effect before any technical work was started.

IZVESTIYA Assesses Bush's Speech

PM2901212192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Report by Artur Blinov and Aleksandr Sychev: "G. Bush Addresses the Nation"]

[Text] U.S. President George Bush delivered the "State of the Union" message at a joint session of the two houses of Congress.

This address to the nation was of special significance. November will see a presidential election in which Americans will decide either to replace the White House incumbent or to give Bush a second term running the country. The aim of the "most important speech in the President's political life" was to recover the confidence of the voters, most of whom, according to the results of a recent public opinion poll, prefer Bush's rivals.

The tone of the speech was supposed to destroy the picture Americans have of the President as a man who is too involved with foreign policy and is incapable of bringing the growing crisis in the country's economy swiftly to a halt. The President let it be known that he intends, as he did during the victorious campaign in the Persian Gulf, to act equally resolutely in the sphere of strengthening world security and in the sphere of setting America on the road to prosperity.

He fired his first salvo at Congress, which he told to approve the new state budget for next fiscal year before 20 March.

Nonetheless, according to observers, the program for the country's economic recovery expounded by the President was "amazingly moderate and clearly will not have the same effect on voters as the victory over Iraq." But, there is no doubt that President Bush's foreign policy initiatives are very significant.

Bush said that "if the Commonwealth of Independent States, the former Soviet Union, eliminates all of its ground-launched ballistic missiles with multiple warheads," the United States will destroy all of its Peacekeeper ICBM's, also known as MX, and will reduce the number of warheads on Minuteman missiles to one on each and the number of warheads on sea-launched missiles by approximately one-third.

The construction of the new B-2 strategic bomber, using Stealth antiradar technology, will be confined to the 20 aircraft that already have been ordered, instead of the planned 75. Further production of this bomber will be halted. The United States will cease production of the new W-88 warheads for Trident submarines and will freeze purchases by the Pentagon of the modified cruise missile at the present level (640). Moreover, a considerable proportion of the strategic bombers will be reequipped so that they can be used mainly with nonnuclear weapons.

The military program cuts planned by the U.S. Administration are to provide an additional savings of around $50 billion over the next five years. However, this proposal falls well short of the demands made by the Democrats and even by a number of Republicans in Congress.

Bush informed Moscow of his proposals and received, as he put it, a "very positive response." This matter will be discussed in greater detail at the talks the U.S. and Russian Presidents are to hold at the end of the week when they meet at the President's out-of-town residence at Camp David.

Bush devoted a significant portion of his speech to the administration's course in the economic and social spheres and, above all, to measures to overcome the recession.

The administration's strategic economic program amounts to opening up foreign markets to U.S. producers, increasing appropriations for education and scientific research and development (to $76.5 billion in fiscal 1993), cutting social expenditure, and reforming the banking system.

Kozyrev, Baker Hold Joint News Conference

LD2901165192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1430 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Gennadiy Talalayev, Vasiliy Titov, and Sergey Petukhov]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev described the meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker as "interesting, comprehensive, and full of new ideas." He gave this assessment at a news conference with his U.S. counterpart after the meeting ended in the Kremlin today.

Kozyrev explained Boris Yeltsin's absence at the news conference by the fact that he is very busy with preparations for his trip to the United States, which proves even more the importance of the forthcoming meeting with George Bush and of the intended agenda at Camp David.

James Baker noted that "a wide range of issues on Russian developments, the progress of economic reforms, and the problems of nuclear safety were discussed during an excellent meeting with Boris Yeltsin." He said the sides detailed the forthcoming meeting of Russian and U.S. Presidents at Camp David. [passage omitted]

Those participating in the news conference also reported that Boris Yeltsin and George Bush had exchanged information on the content of the latest arms initiatives before their promulgation. [passage omitted]

James Baker said that because there is still the risk of missile attack "from a number of countries," the United States considers it possible and necessary to discuss prospects for creating a "G-PALS" type defense system. [passage omitted]

Sharing concerns about the probable uncontrolled spread of nuclear technologies in the shape of a "knowledge drain," Andrey Kozyrev remarked that this issue was discussed at the Kremlin meeting and will be discussed at Camp David. Our scientists, who are cooperating with the Russian leadership in resolving this issue, "can expect serious and far-reaching joint measures in this sphere" after the meeting in the United States, he said.

Baker Previews Yeltsin-Bush Talks

LD2901151392 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1420 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker described yesterday's and today's disarmament initiatives by Presidents George Bush and Boris Yeltsin as far-reaching proposals which reflect the new realities and the new spirit in relations between the United States and Russia. James Baker was speaking today at a joint news conference with Andrey Kozyrev, his Russian counterpart, devoted to the earlier meeting with Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin.

Expressing his personal appraisal of the Russian and U.S. Presidents' latest arms initiatives, Baker stressed that the sides would study these proposals with great attention during Yeltsin's upcoming trip to the United States.

It is the first time that the Russian and U.S. Presidents' initiatives for reducing arms and for disarmament, made in the past few hours, are aimed not at achieving a propagandist effect but at reflecting the spirit of cooperation and the new quality in relations between the Russian Federation and the United States, Andrey Kozyrev said.

He confirmed the Russian leadership's political decision not to view the United States as an enemy, adding that this is why Russian "missiles are not intended to hit military or civilian targets in the United States." "We agreed today to continue discussions on technical issues related to implementing this decision in Camp David and after that with the participation of military and political experts and also of leading experts from both sides", the Russian foreign minister added.

On the possibility of U.S. strategic nuclear weapons being retargeted in view of Russia's decision to change the targeting program of its missiles, Baker pointed out that he had only recently learned about that decision and would need time to make a profound study of the possibility of its implementation.

On the ABM treaty's future, Baker stressed that this problem was raised at the meeting with Yeltsin. He said the United States is adhering to that treaty and expects the same attitude from the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] states. We also hope that the Commonwealth countries will observe the other treaties concluded earlier with the Soviet Union, including the treaties on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and limitation of nuclear tests, the secretry of state said.

Kozyrev Considers Ukraine, Black Sea Fleet

OW3001001292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1715 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "There can be no confrontation between Russia and Ukraine or between Russia and Belarus, at least not as long as I am the Russian Foreign Minister," Mr. Kozyrev said today after his meeting with the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Mr. Joao de Deus Pinheiro.

But, at the same time, he admitted that there was an "intense dispute" between Russia and Ukraine about who the Black Sea Fleet should belong to. "We'll keep on arguing—this is normal even in Western Europe—but it has nothing to do with confrontation," he emphasised.

As for Russian-Portuguese relations, Mr. Kozyrev expressed the hope that they had good prospects. "It's very good that Portugal is the EC chairman now, for we need a real friend there," he said. He thought that very much depended on the EC these days and that Russia should be integrated in it. He recalled that the Western countries had helped Portugal during its post-totalitarian period. "I hope we will also be helped, set on our feet and become a normal member of the European Community," the Russian minister said. "We just have to get through this difficult period. Neither a communist nor a nationalist nor any other dictatorship would normalise the situation."

The two ministers discussed various aspects of what Mr. Pinheiro described as "European architecture", in particular a possible agenda and initiatives for Helsinki 2, summit meetings to be held within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe this March and the situation in Yugoslavia.

'A Dispute, Not A Hotbed'

LD2901153492 Moscow TASS in English 1511 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Nikishov, Igor Peskov, and Sergey Ryabikin]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev does not believe any political confrontation exists among Russia and Ukraine and explains the differences between the two Slavic states by the "complex process of getting rid of the heritage of the past". "I hope both Moscow and Kiev will have enough wisdom to remain devoted to the principles of the all-European process, which envisages the inviolability and openness of borders and the respect for human rights", Kozyrev told reporters on Wednesday [29 January].

Kozyrev qualified the present-day relations between Russia and Ukraine as "a dispute, not a hotbed". Heated disputes also occur in the West, but they are no confrontation, he added.

The major part of the Black Sea Fleet should belong to the Commonwealth and be subordinate to a united command, according to Kozyrev. This is the way for civilised decisions, he added.

The foreign minister believes Russia can easily integrate into the all-European process. "We have all possibilities to combine the internal economic development and reforms with the integration into the European Community", he said.

Kozyrev, Portugal's Foreign Minister Meet

LD2901152092 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1402 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Nikishov, Igor Peskov, and Sergey Ryabikin]

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev met Portuguese Foreign Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro today on preparations for the next Helsinki summit and for the next CSCE summit, as well as on bilateral issues and subjects of mutual interest concerning, in particular, development on the European Continent.

The Russian minister said the meeting with his Portuguese colleague shows the important productive nature of direct contacts between representatives of the two countries.

Meets With Khasbulatov

LD2901193692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1720 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan. (TASS)—On behalf of Economic Community member countries, Portuguese Foreign Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro spoke about interest in establishing mutually advantageous contacts with CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member states and many-sided interparliamentary exchanges at a meeting today with Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

At the visitor's request, the head of the Russian parliament spoke about prospects for implementing economic reforms in Russia and about CIS socioeconomic development, the press center of the Republican Supreme Soviet reported. Ruslan Khasbulatov noted the great importance of creating a powerful non-state economy and small enterprises. According to Khasbulatov, the short-sighted attempts to divide up the Armed Forces are causing great worries. In this context the importance of coordinating the efforts of governments and parliaments of Commonwealth member countries in expanding equal business contacts was stressed.

Foreign Minister Sums Up Visit

LD3001090592 Lisbon RDP Comercial Radio Network in Portuguese 2330 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Report by Julio Onofre in Moscow]

[Text] The Portuguese foreign minister's tour of the three Slav republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] ended in Moscow today with a series of meetings and talks. The first was with Marshal Shaposhnikov, who briefed the Portuguese delegation on the plans for the future structure of the CIS armed forces.

The next stop of this diplomatic marathon was the Russian parliament, whose chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov, apprised the Portuguese visitors of the parliamentary situation, the economic reforms, the 400-plus laws passed in the past few months and the interest in increasing relations with the Portuguese parliament.

The third meeting was with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, who was invited by Joao de Deus Pinheiro to visit Portugal. Finally, to mark a traditional friendship, Joao de Deus Pinheiro called on Eduard Shevardnadze, former foreign minister of the former USSR, and almost president of Georgia.

At the end, the Portuguese minister gave us his impressions of his tour of Belarus, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation:

[Begin Pinheiro recording] A mixture of apprehension and optimism. Apprehension insofar as we are conscious of the difficulties—both political and economic but especially the latter—confronting the new states and especially the Russian Federation, and optimism because we have detected a great resolve in the various leaders to seek and find pragmatic solutions respecting the principles of democracy on the road to a market economy, and the idea that Europe must become a single entity, free of barriers of any kind. As I myself have said before, we must not replace ideological barriers with any other kind of barriers, whether they be economic, cultural, or whatever. [end recording]

Kozyrev, CSFR's Havel Discuss New Treaty

LD2901202692 Moscow TASS in English 2009 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vitaliy Yaroshenko]

[Text] Prague January 29 TASS—Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel met Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, who arrived in Prague on Wednesday [29 January] to attend a meeting of the foreign ministers of the CSCE member states.

Kozyrev conveyed to Havel a message from Boris Yeltsin which contained an invitation to pay an official visit to Russia. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.

Havel and Kozyrev discussed international developments, the situation in the Commonwealth and the Russian and the Czechoslovakian role in the European and world affairs.

Both countries support the idea of strengthening the CSCE structures and institutions in order to promote democracy on the continent and to include the CIS member-states into the Helsinki process.

Havel and Kozyrev also discussed bilateral relations and said a new interstate treaty should be worked out.

Recommends CSCE Status for Croatia

LD2901174292 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Croatian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bozidar Gagro received Consul General of the Russian Federation Yuriy Girenko today. During their talks the Consul General said that the Russian Federation has assumed a principled stand to recognize the Republic of Croatia soon, and that it has been urging the inviolability of its borders. The Federation supports a proposal for the Republic of Croatia to be granted CSCE observer status in Prague, and will urge that permanent membership be granted to it.

Intentions To Recognize Croatia, Slovenia Eyed

LD2901184692 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1739 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, January 29 (TANJUG)—Russia intends to recognize the independence of Croatia and Slovenia soon, but it will not establish diplomatic ties with them for the time being, TANJUG has learned from reliable sources in Moscow.

According to these sources, the political decision about recognition has alread been adopted, but the date of its coming into effect has not been set.

TANJUG also learned from these circles that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic today sent a message to Russian President Boris Yeltsin. The message points out, the sources say, that the United Nations is against the recognition of these two Yugoslav secessionist republics, and that the Brussels conference for Yugoslavia, held under auspices of the European Community (EC), is still underway.

The same sources say, however, that Milosevic's message is at least two or three weeks late, because Yeltsin has allegedly already signed Russia's principled political decision.

Nevertheless, Russia does not intend to establish diplomatic relations with either Croatia or Slovenia until a political agreement is reached on the future of the Yugoslav state.

It is also underscored that, before it announces its decision on the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, Russia will send to Serbia, and perhaps also to Montenegro, its high-ranking representatives who will try to explain that this decision was taken as the recognition of the actual status quo.

Serbia and Montenegro have declared on several occasions that they are against the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia before the Yugoslav crisis is definitely resolved.

It is especially significant that Russia will maintain the stand that the Yugoslav state exists, which means that it is up to the wisdom of the remaining Yugoslav leadership to proclaim the secession of Slovenia and Croatia as just such an act, and not as the country's disintegration which would mean that the country's property at home and abroad would have to be divided, the reliable sources in Moscow underscore.

The secessionist Yugoslav Republics of Slovenia and Croatia were recognized by the EC on January 15, although the arbitration commission of the Yugoslavia conference had concluded that Croatia does not meet conditions for recognition. The United Nations and the United States have not recognized the sovereignty of Slovenia and Croatia.

Oil Supply Agreement Reached With Lithuania

LD2901224692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1954 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Kazys Uscila]

[Text] Vilnius, 29 Jan (TASS)—Lithuania will pay 3,000 rubles for a tonne of oil from the beginning of February. This agreement, Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius stated at a session of the government, was reached today during his negotiations with Gennadiy Burbulis, Russian Federation first deputy prime minister, and Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar.

The head of the Lithuanian Government reported that the negotiations "were very difficult", because the Russian side had set the condition that Lithuania should pay for deliveries of oil products in convertible currency, contrary to the interstate treaties already reached. According to Gediminas Vagnorius, it was agreed that oil supplies will be at the level of December last year. The Russian side also gave an assurance that quotas will be allocated and licenses written out in the next few days for the fulfilment of obligations undertaken in the treaties for deliveries of other raw materials and assembly components.

The Lithuanian side proposed lifting all restrictions on bilateral deliveries and a switch to a direct exchange of goods, Gediminas Vagnorius said, but this question has been left open for now.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Conference Concludes; Results Examined

LD3001032192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1946 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Postanogov and Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow, 29 Jan (TASS)—The Moscow conference on the organization of multilateral talks on the Middle East under the cochairmanship of the Russian Federation and the United States completed its work today. Did it prove possible to make good use of the opportunity to move forward along the road toward a Middle East settlement?

If one evaluates what has been happening in Moscow in the past two days from the viewpoint of a final solution to the whole complex of problems that have accumulated in the Middle East, then the results achieved here may seem to be less than modest. But if one takes as one's starting point the fact that the conference organizers, soberly bearing in mind the present state of the settlement process, did not even set themselves such supertasks, then the assessments of the results achieved are more optimistic.

This is indicated at least by the fact that a number of leaders of the delegations attending the Moscow conference gave it a positive appraisal on the whole. Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis thinks the Moscow conference was "an important step toward overcoming the logic of confrontation in the region," and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has stated directly that the occasion marked "an important contribution toward resolving the Middle East conflict."

The results and atmosphere of the conference were undoubtedly affected seriously by the refusal of the Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian delegations to attend the talks. After arriving in Moscow the Palestinians clearly hinted that the reason for their absence at the conference was the fact that the conference organizers, in continuing to implement the Madrid formula, denied the representatives of the Palestinian diaspora the right to attend the talks. Attempts by Russia and the United States to come to a compromise over this issue came up against Israel's hard line of abiding by the formula for Palestinian participation worked out in Madrid and refusing to make any changes to it. Obviously, this lowered the level of the conference and made its results less significant.

What are these results?

First—and all participants have acknowledged this—it proved possible to initiate the beginning of a new stage in the Middle East peace settlement process during which it is intended to look for solutions to such questions of regional importance as the establishment of regional security, the development of economic cooperation, the use of water resources, the improvement of the ecological situation, and a settlement to the refugee problem.

Second, as the two-day discussion showed, the situation regarding the Palestinian delegation is not insoluble. In the opinion of most of those who attended and, particularly important, of the cochairmen, the expansion of the Madrid formula on the participation of Palestinians in the talks is perfectly possible after work by the various groups on individual panregional problems, including the problem of refugees, begins.

A third positive element can be seen in the fact that the Arab states of the Persian Gulf sat down at the negotiating table with the Israelis for the first time, thereby demonstrating their wish to embark on a dialogue with Tel Aviv. Although at the present stage it is hard to say how the dialogue will subsequently turn out, it is nevertheless already a step forward.

Finally, in one way or another the numerous bilateral contacts between the conference participants, during which the sides were able to specify their positions and to find points in common on the various regional problems, also have a positive importance.

Petrovskiy Terms Moscow Talks 'Successful'

LD2901204592 Moscow TASS in English 2001 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Postanogov and Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS - The Moscow Middle East meeting was successful and promoted the process of Middle East settlement, deputy head of the Russian delegation to the meeting believes.

The Moscow talks gave impetus to multilateral cooperation in discussing the regional problems, which is to develop jointly with bilateral negotiations, Vladimir Petrovsky told reporters on Wednesday [29 January].

Among the successes of the meeting Petrovskiy listed was the birth of a desire that the negotiating process not stall, that efforts should be joined in discussing regional problems, that most of the delegations realised the high level of interaction in world affairs and that Russia and the United States closely cooperated to promote progress in the peace process.

Petrovskiy regretted the absence of several delegations in Moscow, but expressed the hope they will join the peace process later.

The Middle East settlement is impossible without solving the Palestinian problem, Petrovskiy said, adding that the Palestinian participation in multilateral talks was very fruitful. He admitted that the Madrid formula can be enlarged during the work of various groups on regional problems, including the refugees problem.

It was agreed that the working groups created in Moscow will meet this April-May, but the concrete forms of their meetings have not yet been defined, Oleg Derkovskiy, a member of the Russian delegation, said. The co-chairs of the conference plan to solve the problem by maintaining dialogue among themselves and with other participants, he added.

The co-chairs, according to Derkovskiy are now engaged in promoting serious negotiations between the conflicting sides on the implementation of the principle of "exchange of territories for peace", which is the basis of the U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338.

The Russian position on the creation of a Palestinian state envisages that "the Palestinian people have the right to self- determination", but other Middle East peoples enjoy the right as well, Derkovskiy stressed. The form of implementing the right depends on "the position of Palestinians, of the Palestinian leadership and on the results of the peace process, which began in Madrid and was continued in Moscow", he added.

Termed 'Diplomatic Success'

LD2901211192 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1930 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The multilateral meeting on a Middle East settlement ended in Russia's capital today. Addressing journalists at a news conference at the press center of Russia's Foreign Ministry, Vladimir Petrovskiy, the deputy head of the delegation of the Russian Federation, said:

[Begin Petrovskiy recording] This meeting has ended beneficially for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. An exchange of views rich in content took place at a high political level between states of the Middle Eastern region and those that have close political and economic ties with that region. It must be said that already such a dialogue under current conditions is important in itself.

But what is especially vital is that the Moscow negotiations have led to the creation of mechanisms for discussing and resolving such topical tasks as: the formation of regional security, the development of economic cooperation, the improvement of the ecological situation, the use of water resources, and the settlement of the problem of refugees.

In other words, on hand is a very appreciable practical result. A start has been given to multilateral cooperation on pan-regional themes, which should develop on the basis of constructive parallelism, simultaneously with bilateral negotiations which are of decisive importance for the establishment for a lasting and just peace in the Middle East.

We wanted to say frankly that of late none of the measures of conference diplomacy has been accompanied by such a fairly large share of skepticism, and not only on the part of the mass media but also on the part of politicians. There probably were reasons for this. The holding in Moscow of a meeting on the Middle East was connected with difficulties not only of a political, but also of a material-technical nature. Today we can say with relief that the expectations of the skeptics have not been realized. The Moscow meeting, in the unanimous view of all those who took part in it, was crowned with a diplomatic success. The Moscow meeting revealed the consensus of all participants that both processes—the bilateral and the multilateral—must not only not impede one another, but, on the contrary, mutually enrich and accelerate the progress toward a final settlement in the region. [end recording]

Kozyrev Interviewed on Russian Mideast Policy

PM2901165192 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 28 Jan 92 p 4

[Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev by Vladimir Kolistikov in Moscow; date not given]

[Text] [Kolistikov] The multilateral negotiation will begin on Tuesday (today) within the framework of the peace process in the Middle East, and Russia is the co-sponsor with the United States. So what are your expectations, and what do you expect from that conference?

[Kozyrev] What is taking place in Moscow is an organizational meeting to prepare for the multilateral negotiations concerning regional issues. Thus none of the co-sponsors or the participating parties expect ready-made solutions or miraculous prescriptions. Our mission is much more modest, as it is confined to agreeing to form working groups to discuss tangible issues, and to determining the number of these groups, their structure, and the venue and dates for their proceedings. Despite our difficulties, which everyone understands, and the shortness of time, we will be able to exert utmost efforts so that the meeting will be crowned with success.

[Kolistikov] The idea of convening the conference under the two superpowers' sponsorship emerged during the era of the confrontation between them. Now that conditions have changed and the conflict has ended, what will Russia's role be?

[Kozyrev] True, the idea emerged during the confrontation years, specifically in 1973 when the internecine conflict fed by ideologies was the motivating factor for all the activities of the Soviet Union and the United States. Without taking account of that reality and displaying willingness to search for a compromise, the hope of a settlement in the Middle East will be impossible. But saying that the emergence of the institution of the co-sponsors is confined to the aforementioned reason means addressing only half the issue. Since then the emergence of that institution has meant acknowledging the importance of the two states' interests in the region and their ability to exercise a positive influence on the peace process. Therefore the co-sponsorship between the United States and the Soviet Union (now Russia) of the peace conference is a sound and fruitful idea. The Russian leadership, which exerted extensive efforts with the United States to end the internecine conflict, is happy with the existence of a new atmosphere in relations between the two countries. We believe that interaction in the formula of the joint leadership of the conference is the main guarantee for the continuing and depth of the peace process.

[Kolistikov] Analysts believe that the end of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the family of independent states is changing the geopolitical balance in the Middle East. So will Russia's position on the conflict in that region change? Is it affected by the positions of the former [Soviet] Islamic republics?

[Kozyrev] The establishment of 15 independent states and the entry of 11 of them into the family (of independent states) must have an effect at the world level. Because the family includes "independent states," certain disagreements might emerge in terms of their handling of international affairs.

Russia as a state "carrying on from" the Soviet Union and also inheriting its active role in Middle Eastern affairs will tackle the Arab-Israeli dispute. It has removed the ideological blindfold from its eyes. This, because we are calling for a just and strong peace in that region. That is, on the basis of taking account of the legitimate interests and concerns of all the parties directly concerned. Such a peace responds to Russia's national interests. This is why we will make our political line fully consistent with international law conventions which is detrimental to no one and cannot be applied selectively.

[Kolistikov] Russia announced that it is the heir to the Soviet Union and occupied its permanent seat in the Security Council—which makes it a decisive voice in settling international issues, including those concerning the Third World. Does Russia intend to continue the Soviet Union's role as a superpower?

[Kozyrev] Russia joined the family of independent states on the basis of complete equality among all parties. But it cannot forget the special responsibility history has placed on its shoulders. This applies to the nuclear weapons and the commitments dictated by its position as a superpower and as a permanent member of the Security Council. This position is recognized in the entire world and does not conflict with the formation of the "family," within whose framework there is total understanding over the issues in question.

[Kolistikov] But where does Russia fit the developing states into its foreign policy?

[Kozyrev] When we define the priorities of that policy we do not intend to overlook the developing states, nor do we intend to abandon the efforts designed to iron out the difficult problems from which that large group of countries are suffering. We are now working to make our relations consistent with Russia's tangible capabilities. These relations will be established on a clear ground and will not be a kind of international propaganda and deception. In fact they will center on reality. This means that there will be no ideological commitment, but, rather, commitments that can be carried out in practice and are based on mutual benefit.

In all cases the Third World will gain more, not from economic cooperation with Russia under governmental agreements but from the elimination of the fabricated obstacles that used to obstruct interaction between Russian businessmen and foreign markets.

[Kolistikov] It is clear that Russia occupies a distinctive position within the independent states family. But does that negate the need for its consultation with the other parties of the family before making the important political decisions, especially in the Security Council?

[Kozyrev] All the parties in the family of independent states have pledged to develop equal cooperation in all fields, including foreign policy. It is clear that the realization of the joint political aims, including guaranteeing security, peace, and human rights, requires consultations and an exchange of views over political steps so that no party will harm another party or the family in general.

After the exclusion of the "elder brother" concept from relations, consultations are now conducted on the basis of sovereignty, equality, taking account of one another's interests. Russia is not after a special position in the family, nor does it intend to occupy it.

[Kolistikov] In the light of the worsening of problems and disagreements within the family of independent states, will not international issues move to a secondary position among your priorities?

[Kozyrev] Obviously the family has its own problems and concerns, and Russia cannot ignore that in its bilateral relations, and it is seeking to resolve these problems in accordance with terms acceptable to everyone. But that does not mean that international affairs become a shadow for the problems among the (former Soviet) republics.

In its capacity as a permanent member of the Security Council it intends to continue to exert efforts and participate in guaranteeing peace and security in the world.

Kozyrev, Abu-Jabir Meet on Peace Efforts

LD2901134392 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Report by correspondent A. Peslyak on a meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir in Moscow on 29 January; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The counterpoint of yesterday's debates and friction on the Near East was two news conferences held last night by Israel and Jordan. It is not accidental that Kozyrev today met his Jordanian colleague after meeting Italian Foreign Minister de Michelis. Abu-Jabir, apart from expressing his interest in Gogol and Dostoyevskiy, told "Vesti" that:

First, he is generally satisfied with the outcome of the meeting;

Second, Kozyrev promised to continue work toward the Palestinian diaspora joining the next stage of multilateral talks;

Third, he repudiates Israel's claims to a newly established border with the Kingdom along the River Jordan, like he did at yesterday's news conference;

Fourth, the two ministers talked about bilateral relations, about trade, and about students in the Russian higher educational establishments.

Amman looks forward to Kozyrev's visit, and Kozyrev, for his part, looks forward to his meeting with the heads of six Arab delegations. Incidentally, having assessed the first day of the meeting as valuable and good, he somehow forgot to mention that the Russian delegation turned its news conference into a dazzling flop.

'Revolutionary Violence Movement' Issues Threat

PM2901152392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 5

[Gennadiy Charodeyev report: "Moscow Talks in Jeopardy?"]

[Text] The opening of the Moscow meeting to organize multilateral talks on the Near East was delayed more than 30 minutes.

The reason was the Palestinian delegation's nonarrival in the Hall of Columns. IZVESTIYA's correspondent managed to ascertain that five foreign ministers telephoned the PLO Embassy in Moscow to find out why the Palestinians were absent. The callers included Andrey Kozyrev and James Baker. However, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman reported later, they did not get any specific explanation.

Russian and foreign journalists exchanged opinions in the lobby in this connection. The Americans, for example, voiced the opinion that now there was no point at all in continuing the conference.

This time journalists were not admitted to the conference hall. But with the help of television cameras they still managed to see that not only the Palestinians but also the Algerian and Yemeni delegations were missing. They failed to find out why.

A few minutes before the conference began in the Hall of Columns some people distributed leaflets in Russian. This is what the sheet of paper said: "Revolutionary Violence Movement. Political Statement." It went on to report that the text had been translated from Arabic into Russian at the request of someone by the name of Melissa Robinson. This was stated in boldface in the leaflet: "We young people, believing in the triumph of what is right and fair, are fully resolved to dedicate our lives to the physical destruction of Zionism and its leaders. We warn all who cooperate with Zionists and who give them support—this applies in particular to news agencies, journalists, and politicians. We also warn the Arab emirs and the kings of the Gulf states who give support to Zionism that we will destroy both them and members of their families."

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker spoke during the first few hours of the conference, as did the heads of the foreign policy departments of Japan, Canada, and Israel and representatives of the EC. Commentators drew attention to that part of the Russian minister's speech concerning the question of financing the meeting. "Holding the meeting in Moscow," he said, "entails major material and technical expenditure for us. A number of countries promised us definite financial assistance, and I would like to voice the hope that the promises will be honored."

Israeli Representative Denies Levi Remarks

LD2901203792 Moscow TASS in English 1946 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Postanogov and Vasili Titov]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—An understanding was reached on the second day of the Moscow Middle East conference on the time and place for the five working groups to meet, Josef Hadas, the director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry said at a news conference on Wednesday [29 January]. Israel suggested forming one more working group dealing with health protection, he added.

Hadas regretted that the Palestinian delegation did not take part in the Moscow talks, but stressed that Israel prefers the Madrid formula of negotiations. The Palestinians should respect the earlier reached agreements on the composition of their delegation, he added. "We are not going to change the agreements", Hadas said.

The representative denied that Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi spoke about the West Bank as a territory belonging to Israel. The minister "did not say what some Arab representatives attribute to him", Hadas stressed.

'Ashrawi on Madrid 'Formula', Palestinian Unity

LD2901155392 Moscow TASS in English 1444 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—Progress in Middle East peace negotiations is impossible unless the Palestinian people are fully represented, Hanan 'Ashrawi, the spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation told a news conference in Moscow today.

According to 'Ashrawi, after U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said on Tuesday [28 January] it was possible to change the formula for Palestinian participation in the talks, the Palestinian delegation addressed an official memorandum to the two co-sponsors of the talks to announce its readiness to take part in the working groups at the Moscow meeting and proposing to set up two additional working groups—one to deal with the Jerusalem problem and the other to consider the human rights issue.

But the delegation got no official invitation to attend today's sessions and was unable to take part in their work, while understanding that Palestinian participation was positive and constructive. "We are still ready to take part in the work," 'Ashrawi said, but not on the basis of Israeli decisions.

"We remain committed to the idea of Palestinian unity," 'Ashrawi stressed, "and we will effectively express this unity at all stages of the struggle for peace."

'Ashrawi told journalists that the Palestinians had taken part in bilateral talks in keeping with the unfair Madrid formula which had been adopted to enable the negotiating process to begin. "We will insist on expanded Palestinian representation at multilateral talks," she pointed out.

'Ashrawi then said the Palestinian side was not to blame for attempts to disrupt the conference. Israel is seeking to restrict the access for Palestinians to the Middle East process by dictating its own terms. According to 'Ashrawi, the success of multilateral negotiations will be ensured by a political settlement of the conflict at the bilateral level. But multilateral talks can stimulate progress in bilateral contacts if they are conducted on an equitable basis.

'Amr Musa on 'Positive Results' of Talks

LD2901225692 Moscow TASS in English 2132 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Postanogov and Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—The Moscow meeting achieved certain positive results, 'Amr Musa, the Egyptian foreign minister said at today's news conference.

Egypt considers the multilateral talks a component of a wider process of peace negotiations based on the principle "peace in exchange for territories", the Egyptian minister stressed.

In the course of the Moscow meeting an agreement was reached on the creation of a committee on Palestinian refugees and on the resumption of the negotiating process late in April or early in May, 1992. All participants favoured admitting delegates from the Palestinian diaspora outside the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to attend meetings of some working groups.

Musa called "regrettable" Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi's statement that the Israeli border passes along the Jordan River. "Israel has no rights to the West Bank", the Egyptian minister stressed.

Musa noted Russia's positive contribution to the negotiating process, welcomed its role in the Middle East settlement and pointed out the possibility of participation of other Commonwealth countries in the Middle East peace process.

He came out in favour of conducting talks not in the Middle East but in Europe.

At the end of the news conference the Egyptian foreign minister said the negotiating process deserves approval and support and expressed hope for its successful accomplishment.

Federation Affairs

Burbulis Interviewed on Nature of Reforms

LD2901141592 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Jan 92 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Gennadiy Burbulis, Russian state secretary and first deputy chairman of the government, by Sergey Parkhomenko in Stockholm and Moscow 22 January 1992: "Gennadiy Burbulis: Political Role—'Killer.' Russian State Secretary and First Deputy Chairman of Government Agrees With That Assessment"]

[Text] **Power**

[Parkhomenko] Perhaps we could start with a question that I already had asked you when we agreed on this interview—aboard the aircraft en route from Moscow to Helsinki. If you remember, I said then that the definition of "eminence grise" that was bestowed on you so often yesterday is now a thing of the past. You have lost that image. You have "shaken off the image" by occupying one of the Russian state's top leadership posts. Yet, one now hears increasingly frequently another definition of your political role: "killer." That is in English. What the French call a "tueur" and Russians an "ubiytsa."

Have you heard that said of yourself? What do you think about it?

[Burbulis] I am totally indifferent to these assessments. First, because what you have just said comes as total news to me. What does it mean?

[Parkhomenko] Believe me, there is nothing recriminatory or insulting in that description. It is just a term used to define a specific role—one of several possible for a professional politician. It is the same in soccer: There are "sweepers," "liberos" [free players], etc. While a "killer" politician is someone who brusquely moves to the attack, a politician who makes some kind of breakthrough. A politician who removes obstacles. And, if necessary, who clears the way...

[Burbulis] That is a very high opinion then. And if I ever live up to it, I will be quite satisfied.

There indeed is something in this image. At least, it grasps the main element in our political line and in mine: Our determination and certainty of the need for the reform and transformation of Russia's social system on which we have embarked now finally in practice.

We certainly are not characterized by hesitation when our goal has been analyzed quite clearly, when the main avenues of strategy have been checked out, and when there is what one might call an agonizing awareness of the kind of measures without which Russians cannot hope for a better life today.

But, it would pain me very much were this image not accompanied by a very important amendment. A highly important ethical and cultural principle exists: "Do not inflict harm." That is a philosophical credo and political philosophy. At least, it is my sincere desire to operate on the basis of this principle: No ends, even the most elevated, can justify inadmissible means of achieving those ends.

[Parkhomenko] During your visit to Sweden you said in one statement something that I consider very important. You were talking about the totalitarian system that is now being destroyed, and you said something like this: "Mankind would have tried this all the same, somewhere, at some time. It should have seen for itself that it is impossible and inhuman to try to make people happy through force..."

[Burbulis] There is a fundamental, interesting difference between the understanding of history as an objective law-governed process with its own logic and, on the one hand, elevated messianism and, on the other, fatal predetermination... As far as I am concerned it is important for the objective logic behind historical events to combine the history of ideas, the history of people, and the history of events.

We hitherto mercilessly exploited one of these components in life's integral process. We either extracted one idea from the history of ideas and wanted to rewrite all life to fit it, or we became enamored of a particular individual and rigged the logic of life itself to suit that individual, or else we succumbed to events—either as faits accomplis without realizing that the reality of existence is above all each person's personal, individual, unrepeatable life.

There is the surprise of the final combination of **events** [sobytiya] where the internal meaning of this term is important for me as a philosopher, literally meaning "co-living" [so-bytiye]. It is not an event as a fact, nor as a particular deed, but an **event** as the interlinking of the lives of one person, another, a third, tens of thousands, millions in one another's lives.

So as to wind up this subject on an equally philosphical note, I will say that our situation is characterized by the increased internal historicism of everyone's individual existence. Every person, while falling in love, having children, and achieving some professional success, is at the same time taking part in this unified historical development—in replacing the social system and freeing the oppressed natural forms of life.

[Parkhomenko] That is, he is taking part in the political struggle. But, is the "every person" to whom you refer able to experience common-or-garden compassion and sympathy for his enemy?

[Burbulis] No. That is another state. That is not mercy, but sympathy—both for myself and for those who are forced to assess my actions as unfavorable or, particularly, evil in terms of their bearing on themselves. That is, selfish and unjust.

[Parkhomenko] So, Yeltsin, for instance—although he is not the only one, needless to say—treated Gorbachev totally mercilessly...

[Burbulis] Well, you are not recording this, are you?

[Parkhomenko] Of course, I am.

[Burbulis] Can I be heard? That is no bad thing... Sometimes it happens...

[Parkhomenko] Well then, we are speaking about Gorbachev, about ruthlessness. Was that absolutely necessary?

[Burbulis] First, that is quite wrong...

[Parkhomenko] What? You got rid of him. He is no more. He is smashed to pieces.

[Burbulis] That is quite wrong from the viewpoint of the real events of 8 through 25 December 1991.

Everything that happened at that time was quite essential and morally justified. Gorbachev and people close to him could not even be supposed to have the proper level of understanding of the whole process. It just did not exist. So, there was a painful personal reaction to something that would have happened sooner or later anyway. Regardless of which people specifically promoted this in the given situation.

I think that an individual's full dignity resides in not exaggerating his social destiny. It is important to be able to escape in time from a specific role in which each of us finds himself from time to time: when the individual and the post merge so much that your sense of duty to people is lost. For me that is one of the most important coordinates and criteria in my own work and activity today. The courage and the rank of a politician are just like those of a sportsman or, moreover, those of a person from any of the professions that demand heightened effort and daily mobilization and which are at the same time the focus of the greatest public attention; thus, the courage and rank of a politician depend in many respects on how ready he is to separate two problems: stepping out of his post and preserving himself as an individual.

I think that at that time we had plenty of evidence of an inability to view what was happening in that way. Moreover, some kind of crisis, the limit of the political style that Gorbachev represented in principle took their toll. Bringing the collapse of the whole political concept whereby it is not people and their lives that are of value in themselves, but the political role played and its maximum effect on people's lives. The claim that people, the population are a means for a politician to use is the most extreme manifestation of this doctrine, In actual fact, politics is the instrument of people's lives.

[Parkhomenko] Whereas we have begun to talk about the correlation between the "individual and his post," I would like to remind you of ideas that have been aired quite frequently—I will not say that I disagree with them entirely—that President Yeltsin has focused too much responsibility on himself today. I am of course also referring to his team of immediate staffers.

Experience of reform in Poland and Eastern Europe in general shows that responsibility, however cynical it sounds, should at the critical moment be "spread" around the largest possible group of politicians. So that they can "rotate" if necessary...

[Burbulis] You must bear one thing in mind. There could be no question of any practical reform in Russia with any other kind of format for powers of authority.

[Parkhomenko] Why not?

[Burbulis] Because a quite specific Russian mentality exists.

[Parkhomenko] Well, yes—a charismatic mentality.

[Burbulis] It constitutes a unique combination of psychology, ethics, and expectations.... This mentality presupposed this format alone for us. It contained a social and, I can say quite calmly, historical imperative. And it is Russia's great achievement that its first president has proved consonant with and commensurate to this requirement. This supertask echoed his purely human life's style. It is my profound conviction that, in assuming full responsibility for the implementation of reform, Boris Yeltsin has carried out the most important and substantive act of his political career. I have no doubts that this was justified.

[Parkhomenko] Allow me to ask what may be a forbidden question. The strangest and sometimes terrible surprises occur in life—ultimately, both heart attacks and car accidents do occur...

If everything rides on Yeltsin, who is his successor? Is there one? Is there a problem of succession within the incumbent Russian leadership? Is this a problem for Yeltsin personally? He cannot, after all, fail to think about this as a serious politician.

[Burbulis] I would not like to word the problem like that. I have never claimed that "everything rides on Yeltsin."

I have only said that in Russian life it is very important for the individual and public requirements to coincide.

[Parkhomenko] Yet that happy coincidence is not everlasting. It can be destroyed suddenly by certain circumstances...

[Burbulis] Well, what of it? We already have been able to instill in Russians a need for a professional competent leadership. One that is not only understandable, but also able to work.

We already have been able to depend on the wish to build this entirely new economic system of ownership. That is, there exists a whole series of irreversible changes and achievements. And, in my view, they are enough not to presage collapse and hopelessness in those situations that you are trying to consider.

And, last, there is natural human wisdom. It will not allow everthing that we have achieved together to be overturned.

[Parkhomenko] You mentioned a little earlier the events of "8 through 25 December..." But I think that the countdown to the events of the last few days in the Soviet Union's history should not start from the time that the three leaders met in Minsk. Now that this epic work is all behind us, could you not say now when the plan was conceived—if it was, of course—and when you became determined to take that political step on which the entire present sitation is based...

[Burbulis] I am not able at present to review the entire sequence of events. I can only say the main thing. There was a period during these few days and months when history confronted Boris Nikolayevich with the question: Under what conditions—political, legal, and organizational—can economic reforms begin in Russia? Economic reforms—as the main lever for improving people's lives. It was not some splendid schemes for a political plan or any predilections for a personal plan, but this ultimate problem that predetermined everything else: When can people start to live better?

The conclusion was agonizing: Only once they have gotten a chance to possess economic freedom as man's natural right. Moreover, the way to this freedom for a citizen has to be traveled within the conditions of the Russian economy and the Russian economic system.

[Burbulis] Then it became clear that the Novo-Ogarevo process only reproduces the ambiguity and hypocrisy of the structures and subjects party to it. And that it is only capable of dragging out the interval that they need for self-preservation... And that the process is based not on progress or development, but on the desire to survive. The most powerful currents within the specific Communist system in which leaders and various representatives of the center, whose positions now personify this system, grew up and took shape...

The Minsk idea emerged from two sources. On the one hand, we constantly remembered the attempt to hold the same kind of meeting in February 1991—an action that was scheduled and prepared, but failed. And, on the other hand, the republics themselves took on a new quality: By December, they already had agonized long enough to win not only a "perceptible" desire for sovereignty and independence, but also the practical need for these things as the conditions for performing life's pressing—economic—tasks on their territory.

The hoping for a miracle, for a kind word from the head of state was exhausted. There was no mystic belief in a signature and a document. Human logic, the logic of life, was taken as predetermining: The collapsing Communist empire has its own laws and one of them says that the states must experience a certain period as independent entities. We put that logic into effect in Minsk: We enshrined the republics' independence in special agreements as the natural and logical conclusion of a certain phase in the breakup of the empire. It is quite natural that at that time the emphasis was laid on independence and that the somewhat inflamed perception of oneself as an independent state was even observed...

I think that this period will be played out in the near future and another prevailing modality will emerge: the need for a commonwealth. The need for a commonwealth, cooperation, collaboration, coparticipation, and concord...

When two spouses—conscientious, inwardly honest people—live together for a long time, depressing one another without love and harmony, and they find the courage at one point to tell the whole truth about the impossibility of continuing to live like that, when people split up, they are profoundly convinced that a miraculous state of freedom has arrived. And often they swear never to enter into matrimony again or trust members of the opposite sex. At the time of a break with a system, suspicions are quite natural that a particular state in the Commonwealth may reproduce the images and highlights of that system. These recriminations are most frequently leveled at Russia.

But life is richer, it is fuller and inwardly more just than our limited consciousness allows us to imagine. We are acutely aware of our feeling of being freed from that oppression, but this is not freedom—it is in actual fact far more diverse and fuller.

Things will be as they are for those spouses: Time will pass, certain human needs will prevail, and it will turn out that it is not only a pleasure but a human calling to love and to give oneself to another...

[Parkhomov] Do you think that this is possible in politics, too? Do you think it possible for one state to "give itself" to another—politically or economically? That is similar to political anthropomorphism. Are you humanizing whole countries?

[Burbulis] That is the global question behind the need to formulate new political activity.

The point is that politics must be transformed increasingly from the sphere of relations of authority that contains jurisdiction, execution, and regulation into some kind of integral activity encompassing economic, cultural, and political specifics. Speaking at Stockholm's Political Institute, I tried to define this with the formula of "collective-participation diplomacy"—one is conscious of a worldwide need for something of the kind. This represents a need for a new alphabet of political activity, new regulations for political conduct, and a new political philosophy...

Minister Addresses ITAR Working Group

LD2901163692 Moscow TASS in English 1555 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—The Russian leadership is interested in developing commercial information agencies along with the new state-owned ITAR Agency, Russian Minister of Press and Information, Mikhail Poltoranin, told the working group created to implement President Boris Yeltsin's decree prescribing to launch the ITAR Agency.

The ITAR Agency is created on the basis of TASS and part of the former NOVOSTI News Agency, Poltoranin said. The RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY, RIA, will be a joint stock company, just as it was expected to be when it was first started. We would like to see more independent commercial agencies and this will stimulate competition, he said. Poltoranin rejected allegations that the Russian leadership wanted to create an information super monopoly.

Poltoranin pointed out the necessity of preserving the unified information network of the former Soviet Union. All the new Commonwealth states can keep it on a shareholding basis, Poltoranin said.

As a state agency, ITAR must have space to manoeuvre. There is always a possibility to create parallel commercial structures along with the state ones. It will eventually lead to a self-supporting news agency which asks for nothing from the government.

The working group which developed the statute on ITAR and the division of material and intellectual property between TASS and NOVOSTI included chief executives of Press and Information Ministry, TASS and NOVOSTI.

TASS To Switch To New Name 30 Jan

LD2901194292

[Editorial Report] Moscow TASS International Service in Russian at 1526 GMT on 29 January carries the following item on TASS switching to its new name ITAR:

"For the information of the receivers of TASS news.

"At 0000 [2100 GMT] on 30 January 1992, new datelines will be introduced for all of the agency's reports—carrying out the decree by Russian President Boris Yeltsin on the creation of the Information and Telegraph Agency of Russia (ITAR) on the basis of the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) and the Russian Information Agency 'Novosti' (RIA 'Novosti'). Instead of the 'TASS' designation in the datelines of agency's reports the abbreviation 'ITAR-TASS' will be used.

"On occasions when reports specially prepared for us by correspondents from other news agencies, including national agencies of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, are broadcast on the agency's channels, the name of the agency in question and the abbreviation 'TASS' will be given in the dateline of such reports.

"For example: 'Kiev, 30 Jan (UKRINFORM-TASS)'; 'Alma-Ata, 30 Jan (KAZTAG-TASS)'; 'Minsk, 30 Jan (BELTA-TASS)'; or 'Moscow, 30 Jan (KRIMPRESS-TASS)'.

"[Signed] Vladimir Baydashin,

"editor-in-chief of the ITAR-TASS world service agency."

Remains 'Heart' of Network

LD2901230192 Moscow TASS in English 2217 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS analyst Nikolay Zheleznov]

[Text] Moscow January 30 (TASS)—A new ITAR-TASS logo will mark all messages coming from ITAR-TASS headquarters in Moscow, but this is only an outside manifestation of deeper changes which aim to provide informational support to reform in Russia.

Having ceased to exist as an all-Union agency, TASS will remain the heart of the information network for 14 independent news agencies in the former Soviet republics.

The TASS logo has accompanied reports by its correspondents for about sixty years. But life goes on and we are beginning a new page in the history of the news agency: January 30, ITAR-TASS signing on.

Defense Official on New Legal Body Role

LD2901143992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1545 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Interview with Aleksandr Alekseyevich Kotenkov, deputy chairman of the Committee on Defense and Security Issues of the Russian Supreme Soviet, by Oleg Ivanov; place and date not given; in the "Facing Russia" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Ivanov] A decree was issued on 27 December last year by the president of the Russian Federation on the structure of the State Legal Administration [Gosudarstvennoye Pravovoye Upravleniye]—GPU for short. In our studio today, taking part in our program, is Aleksandr Alekseyevich Kotenkov, deputy chairman of the Committee on Defense and Security Issues. He will be answering our questions.

Aleksandr Alekseyevich, the initials GPU have memories for all of us, memories of a negative nature [GPU formerly stood for Gosudarstvennoye Politicheskoye Upravleniye—State Political Directorate—the state security body, and later for Glavnoye Politicheskoye Upravleniye, Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Fleet], and yet if we look at the structure of the State Legal Administration, this is a document which professionals, jurists, and people in the know understand, but how is it to be explained for the broad circle of television viewers in a popular manner, and what are its tasks, and why is it necessary today?

[Kotenkov] Well, first of all, I would like to say that the abbreviation GPU is a somewhat unhappy one, of course, but there is nothing to be done about that. Viewers must nevertheless realize quite clearly that it is not the former Main Political Directorate, it is the State Legal Administration, the task of which is precisely the opposite of that of the old GPU—namely defense of human rights.

In the Russian Supreme Soviet I am involved in defense affairs, so I am more familiar with this topic, and I could use this sphere to demonstrate the need for, and the importance of, the State Legal Administration. I will read some lines from the provision on the State Legal Administration, where it says that one of the tasks of the State Legal Administration is to coordinate work on questions relating to regulation by legal enactment and by other means by security and internal affairs bodies, the judiciary, and other law enforcement bodies, by military administration and civil defense bodies, and also by other state structures of the Russian Federation which are concerned with defense, security, and so forth.

I would like to use this example to demonstrate the following: This body will in principle be the last body below the president and will coordinate and, so to speak, gather in, everything created by other bodies. At present, there are seven structures in the executive authority which are to one degree or another engaged in defense affairs; and in the final analysis, too many cooks spoil the broth, as the saying goes. Military issues in Russia are currently in the most deplorable state.

With the creation of the State Legal Administration, an attempt has at last been made to unite all these efforts into a single body. As you may have noted, I am deputy chairman of a Supreme Soviet committee, and I work in constant contact with Sergey Mikhailovich Shakhray, head of the State Legal Administration, precisely with the aim of coordinating the actions not only of all structures of the executive authority, but also of the legislative executive authority.

Further, I have touched on only one aspect of the work of the State Legal Administration. But as you know, this Administration is made up of 10 departments, which will deal, in addition to matters relating to the enforcement bodies, security, and defense, with ensuring the legislative prerogatives of the president. As you know, in the executive authority it is only the president who has the right of legislative initiative.

[Ivanov] Aleksandr Sergeyevich, how many people will work in this administration?

[Kotenkov] You have touched upon an interesting topic. In all, the administration will have 304 people. Incidentally, here I would like to say that the press has raised a great deal of noise around the state legal administration. Facts are quoted which knock you off your feet—alleging that it is some kind of new monster, that the apparatus is being puffed up again. I would like to show you an instruction of the president of the Russian Federation, dated 14 January this year, which says clearly that a whole lot of existing structures must be done away with—I will not enumerate them—and that the State Legal Administration is being set up on their basis. That is to say, it is not a process whereby parallel structures are being set up, or additional manpower resources taken on—it is an attempt to unite all these bodies which to varying degrees work within the legal sphere, into a single entity.

I would like to quote an example. The paper MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS recently published an article, called "Palace Feuds." It quoted similarly unscrupulous examples of staff establishment numbers. It said, in particular, that only 60 people worked in the Central Committee's Administrative Bodies Section, and that 80 people were employed in the Committee for Combating Crime, the notorious Golik committee. I would like to say that in all, of these 304 people, 43 will deal with legal issues in the security and defense areas. If you add together all the bodies which have so far been dealing with this sphere, you will get quite a few hundred people. Hence, these comparisons are absolutely wide of the mark.

[Ivanov] Aleksandr Sergeyevich, let us go a bit further and talk about sections. What will their remit be, and what, specifically, will they be called; what will their tasks be?

[Kotenkov] Well, continuing on the subject of the numerical strength and on the subject of parallel structures, as some would have it, I would like to name a section—the section in charge of state prizes. It has always existed and it exists in the current structure and government also. Up until now it was part of the Supreme Soviet structure, and it is simply being moved to be a part of the State Legal Administration.

Take the section in charge of citizenship issues: the same applies here. It is a structure that has always existed. It is not the case here either that it is being set up as a parallel structure; it will be under the administration. The same applies to the section in charge of issuing pardons. As for the legal information technology section, this exists in any self-respecting legal firm; it goes without saying that it is a working instrument of the administration.

A special legal expertise section is being set up to safeguard the activities of the Russian Federation Government. Again, it is not being set up in a vacuum, as it were, but on the basis of the legal section of the current presidential administration. Its main task will be to provide expert legal and juridical views concerning all bills, draft decrees, and government decisions.

It must be admitted that up to now, what went through were the decisions, decrees, and drafts which some people or other managed, in a variety of ways, to submit to the president for his signature. Everyone remembers the last battle about the unification of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Federal Security Agency. So much effort had to be expended, so much sweat and tears, as it were, so many resources and so much energy had to be brought into play to restore normal relations between these two bodies.

[Ivanov] Well, the Constitutional Court arrived at its decision, and that is that.

[Kotenkov] Yes, yes, but the thing is, simply, that if this decree had followed the agreed procedure, as it were, if it had been submitted to juridical expertise, instead of being thrust upon us surreptitiously, as it were, I think that this would not have appended. And it is precisely to avoid this that this body is being set up. Let me emphasize again: It is not being set up in a vacuum, but it is being set up to unite all the existing legal structures.

[Ivanov] Aleksandr Sergeyevich, a question arises here: What will the fundamental differences be between the Administration and the CPSU Central Committee's State and Legal Department, the former department?

[Kotenkov] Well, first and foremost, let us begin with the fact that the CPSU Central Committee's State and Legal Department was not a state body at all, this is the first thing. It was a party body. It is one of the examples of the usurpation of power by the party, since matters of state and legal matters can only be decided upon by a state organization. If you take this purely by the functions involved, then the Central Committee's State and Legal Department had fewer functions by far than the Russian Federation president's State and Legal Administration.

Incidentally, a colossal parallel existed in this case. Apart from this department, there existed a department for law protection bodies, a military department of the Central Committee, and, incidentally, I have yet to speak about it.

[Ivanov] They existed in the Council of Ministers.

[Kotenkov] Relevant departments existed within the Council of Ministers. Now all these departments are linked together under one roof, that of the Administration. It has, indeed, a state status. Everything that emanates from this Administration, to be signed by the president or to go to the Parliament as a legislative initiative, has a real, lawful juridical force. This, in essence—it is a very great difference.

[Ivanov] Here is a question to you in tour capacity as deputy chairman of the Committee for Defense and Security Issues. Currently, commanders of military units, subunits, garrisons are selling off arms; moreover it is being done privately. Sales of arms and explosives are underway in the Baltic states. Well, how do you monitor these facts? Are you in control of this situation, or is it the other way round?

[Kotenkov] Ha! The fact is that our committee of course cannot supervise the entire sphere of military policy, let alone the instances that you cite. There are too few of us to be able to carry out supervisory functions such as these. As for what you say, however, I would ask you to give us any specific evidence you may have, since this comes into the procuracy's sphere of activity. No one has the right to trade in weapons, explosive substances, or munitions. Even now, despite the growing commercialization of the former Defense Ministry and the armed forces as a whole, no one has the right to trade in weapons except the state. That is, that function belongs to the state alone, and it is state bodies that carry out supervision, and where necessary it is they who do the trading.

Furthermore, even so-called dual-purpose military property and military equipment—motor vehicles, for instance, and construction equipment—may be sold only through a specially instituted commercial board under the former Defense Ministry, which is setting up its own branches in the districts; trading may be carried out through these branches alone. Anything done outside this is the most flagrant infringement of the law, and citizens who have any information on this should turn to the procuracy: It must be stopped immediately.

[Ivanov] Well, if we have any evidence of this we will pass it on to you. And another question along similar lines: The (Ukhovitskiy) works manufactures MiG-29 aircraft, which have been very popular and much admired at international air shows. Now there are 50 MiG-29s standing at an air base; the Defense Ministry has refused them, western, er..., Eastern European countries, the former socialist camp countries, do not want them either. And the heads of enterprises do not know what to do in such a situation, although there are $1 billion worth of aircraft there with all these MiG-29s.

[Kotenkov] This is indeed a very difficult situation, and it is typical of not only this factory. The fact is that our government, the republic's Supreme Soviet, has opted for a fundamental cut in its military budget. And so as not to make the financial position of servicemen any worse, it has been decided to make the budget cut at the expense of military purchases alone. In the budget, a 7.5-fold cut has been made in military purchases. This is of course a colossal blow to the military industry, but unless such a blow is struck, the blow would have to fall either on the country's budget or on servicemen themselves.

The budget, which has now been allocated to the former Defense Ministry, for defense purposes, envisages a minimal amount of purchases. And for the most part, it will pay salaries for workers at defense enterprises, without the possibility of redeeming—that is, without production of equipment, or correspondingly without redeeming this equipment. This is why a difficult situation has arisen at present at many enterprises, where the equipment has already been manufactured, but not redeemed. Unfortunately ...

[Ivanov, interrupting] Can they sell offers themselves?

[Kotenkov] Yes, they have the right to do so, and this is why a special structure is now being set up to do this in the Russian Government, a structure which will deal with sales of military equipment. I fear that part of the equipment er..., has not been completed, and we shall have simply to destroy it; in particular there are the nuclear submarines, powerful aircraft carriers that have not been completed. But finished equipment like the MiG-29s will of course be sold. But this is, I reiterate, the job of the state, of the government, and not of private individuals or enterprises.

General Seeks Tougher Punishment for Criminals

PM3001105392 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 6

[Yekaterina Kazmina report: "In the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Bolt the Door Firmly..."]

[Text] Press reports on the crime situation in Russia still leave a lot to be desired. At the moment there is little hope that newspaper columns chronicling crimes will be closed. A briefing held 28 January in the Russian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Press Center did not refute these dismal facts either.

The growth in crime is continuing: The number of crimes has increased by 18 percent compared with last year, and it is primarily theft of property that accounts for this. Incidentally, the number of crimes committed since the beginning of perestroyka has more than doubled. Organized crime has flourished profusely. It has embraced new territories and penetrated the spheres of power and entrepreneurial structures. Last year alone, 70 corrupt criminal groupings were unmasked, and around 1,300 groups that have attracted attention are under militia supervision. The number of "traditional" crimes—embezzlement, misappropriation, and theft—is not falling either. The safety of cargo during transport is poorly provided for—for some reason only 14 types of the most valuable goods are guarded.

Today the militia has found itself facing criminals on a one-on-one basis; it is being given practically no support or assistance from other departments or the public.

The decrease in the rate of the growth of street crime is somewhat reassuring —the number of such cases has fallen by 10 percent.

"The law must provide tougher punishment, particularly with respect to leaders of the criminal world and thieves, and life imprisonment and hard labor must be introduced; we must stop feeling sorry for the 'poor criminals,'" Major General of Militia V. Kolesnikov stated resolutely.

But our militia's material and technical base remains poor.

Movement Prepares White House Protest 9 Feb

OW3001003392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The WORKING RUSSIA [WR] movement has conducted large-scale preparations for an action of protest outside the Russian Supreme Soviet on February 9. According to Vassily Makarov, duty executive at the WR's Moscow headquarters on Wednesday [29 January], the march on Moscow's White House will involve such organizations as the "Union of Patriots", the recently formed "Union of Intellectuals", and a number of pro-communist groups and associations acting on behalf of the working class.

The protesters intend to demand the immediate resignation of Yeltsin's government which "broke the law by placing itself at the service of foreign capital." They will insist that factories and plants be transferred to the workers, privately owned shops and exchanges closed, and non-governmental foreign economic activities banned.

Mr. Makarov said the Moscow authorities had officially authorized the planned action. The organizers are hoping "no less than 100,000 honest people" will take part.

Goskomstat Figures Reveal 'Continuing Crisis'

LD2901190192 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 29 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The dry figures from Goskomstat indicate a continuing crisis. In 1991, Russia began to pay for the economic experiments [video shows computer graphics on screen: "Fall in production: industry—by 2.3 percent; agriculture—by 5 percent; goods—by 9 percent"].

Owing to the growth of prices, the volume of industrial production doubled. [video shows computer graphics: "Subsistence wage per member of the family per month: 144 rubles (R) in 1990; R430 in 1991; R1,300 in February 1992 (forecast)"]. Naturally, retail prices doubled as well.

The monetary income of the population rose by the same amount—by 216 percent. The average monthly wage amounted to R530, but this growth was entirely cancelled out by inflation. According to Goskomstat, some 500 industrial enterprises switched over to private or collective ownership during the year. About 50,000 private farms were set up. But the new structures have not yet provided any stimulating effect on the economy, although they are capable of obtaining palpable results. It was to achieve these results that the Russian Government instruction yesterday on the immediate abolition of trading organizations, trusts and associations was directed, which will create the conditions for the independent activities of trade enterprises.

Expert Predicts Deficit-Free Budget Failure

LD2901170992 Moscow TASS in English 1530 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Ignatyev]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—The Russian Government's plans to maintain a deficit-free budget in the first quarter of 1992 will fail, a Russian parliamentary expert said on Wednesday [29 January] in a gloomy forecast. "The state revenues will not be enough to finance its survival, in the same way the task is becoming more and more difficult for every family," Eduard Vedernikov, first deputy head of the Russian parliamentary commission on budget, plans, taxes, and prices, maintains.

Last year's budget deficit reached 108 billion rubles. Inflation skyrocketed with demand exceeding supply by six times, the expert said.

To avoid hyperinflation, the government switched to a severe budget policy in a bid to avoid any deficit and strengthen the ruble, thus stemming economic decline by the end of the year.

But Vedernikov doubts the government will get the expected revenues from taxpayers. Unstable economic developments will force the government to increase allocations to the already set budget spendings. New expenditures may also become necessary as the state enters the most difficult spring period, Vedernikov said, adding the government will have also to increase aid to low-income families.

Still the expert praised the latest budget, saying it was laid much better than last year. But control over the financial activity of the government is weak, as the planned budget revenues and spendings have not been strictly specified, Vedernikov said.

Budget: First Evidence of 'Long-Term Policy'

PM2901150592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Jan 92 Morning Edition pp 1-2

[Sergey Chugayev report: "Russian Budget: New and Tough Rules of the Game..."]

[Text] It will probably be no exaggeration to define the essence of the law on Russia's budget system adopted at the end of last week as an attempt finally, for the first time in over 70 years, to free the state from the heavy burden of managing the entire vast machine of the national economy. A sharp reduction of the state sector of the economy, state funding, and state purchases is beginning. In other words, we are really approaching something for which our best economic minds struggled for many years. The state is ceasing to regulate the economy with administrative measures and is going over to purely economic measures.

The revenue part of the budget provides quite graphic evidence of this. For the first time the revenue base is founded on tax methods. The government expects to obtain almost 90 percent of revenue by means of taxes alone. The chief source is value-added tax. Also new is the introduction of excise duty on 16 kinds of goods—alcoholic beverages, caviar, best-quality fish, furs, crystal, jewelry, and motor vehicles. The government expects this measure to give the treasury 20.5 billion rubles [R].

But, however tough the new tax system might appear, the greatest impression is, of course, made by the government's proposed policy of tough spending economies. There is a reduction under practically all headings, and yet the prices of everything have increased at least fivefold compared with last year. As Lieutenant General V. Vorobyev, chief of the Armed Forces Central Financial Directorate, reported in parliament, a private's overcoat today costs R2,200, while a soldier's rations have gone up sixfold. Nevertheless, spending on defense has been reduced almost 30 percent. Although he did not conceal the gravity of the situation which has taken shape in the army when speaking in parliament, the Armed Forces spokesman did not dramatize it either. Maybe because provision is made in the budget for money for soldiers' overcoats and rations and for accommodations for officers. On the other hand, appropriations for arms purchases have been reduced by a factor of 7.5, again for the first time.

The draft budget and now, too, Russia's budget system have elicited and are continuing to elicit many criticisms. It is believed, for example, that the government is looking too optimistically to the future, understating the assumed level of inflation and overstating the expected revenue from foreign economic activity. It regards the idea of a deficit-free budget as of paramount importance. However, no one has even suggested any serious alternative to the government's thesis that it is only possible to stabilize the economy by halting the main source of inflation—the state budget deficit, which last year in Russia amounted to almost 18 percent of GNP. As for optimism, I believe it is absurd to go into battle convinced of failure in advance.

Of course, today it is hard to predict with accuracy the consequences of the new budget. The government is acting decisively and consistently. This is already a good deal, because it makes it possible to hope that it is, at last, a question not of another experiment but of a normal long-term policy.

No Change in 'Cash Crisis' for Another Month

OW3001132992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1111 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The official in charge of money turnover at the Central Bank of the Russian Federation Andrey Buravtsev has said that the cash crisis in Russia continues and there will be no change for the better even next month. He spoke at a session of the anti-crisis group of the Russian parliament on Wednesday [29 January].

According to the Russian statistical service, on January 25 the government was 14.8 bn [billion] roubles behind in payments of wages, pensions and benefits. The situation is the worst in Kemerovo, Tyumen, Novosibirsk, Altai and Krasnoyarsk regions, Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

Mr. Buravtsev said that the introduction of personal check-books promised by the Central Bank has been postponed due to their insufficient safety.

The head of the anti-crisis group Vladimir Shumeyko called the current cash crisis a threat to the economic security. He voiced intentions to raise the question of compensation for the delays in payments at a session of the presidium of parliament.

Government Discusses Interstate Economic Ties

LD2901205792 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1318 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Our correspondent Vera Shchelkunova has come to the studio from the Russian Government, where a news conference took place today.

[Shchelkunova] Yes, it was another in a series of meetings with ministers in the Russian Government. The Russian Federation's Committee for Economic Cooperation with the states of the Commonwealth of Independent States is just one month and two days old today—or perhaps one should put it more broadly and say the states of the former Union, and be even more precise and say that it is one month and two days since the decree setting it up was adopted. The committee is just coming into being.

The committee is headed by 38-year-old Vladimir Mikhaylovich Mashits, a minister of Russia, a contemporary of Gaydar, having worked in his institute under his leadership, and co-author of all the market programs, as he put it. Whenever a program—like Abalkin's market program—my example—turned into a program of emergency measures, he abandoned it and began to work out a new one.

[Announcer] I imagine that you questioned him most of all about coupons?

[Shchelkunova] No, strange as it may seem, not just about that but about other questions. But Mashits did hold this news conference. He said that the task of the new committee is to coordinate the activity of all Russian ministries and departments on the maintenance of inter-state economic ties. Following the disappearance of the Inter-State Economic Committee, where he used to represent Russia, they have nevertheless decided that there should be some body, and it is being set up on the base of the former State Planning Committee of the Council of Ministers and some other central departments of the former Union.

[Announcer] I do not expect it to have anything at all in common with those departments, it will simply use their material base.

[Shchelkunova] The specialists—yes, and the specialists, the high-class specialists who are there. There used to be 1,600 people, and he is taking 700 of them, but that includes typists: there will be 350 specialists, he said. So the task is, of course, extremely complicated, this coordination as we understand it at this time. One important point he made was that Russia has signed agreements with Kazakhstan and Belarus on lifting a number of restrictions in trade and in economic links in general. This process could be extended, and of course it would be desirable for it to be extended to other states of the former Union. But here, according to Vladimir Mashits, three conditions have to be observed.

[Begin Mashits recording] The first condition is the preservation of the single ruble. For all those republics which introduce cash substitutes or their own national units of currency, there will be different conditions for dealing with them on an economic basis. All three Baltic republics, the Ukraine, Moldova, and perhaps some others are all aspiring to get into this category. Thus, in the case of these republics the provisions will be somewhat different from those which will apply in the case of republics that will have the ruble.

The second condition is the coordination of export and import policy. If we do not do this, the danger of the re-export of raw materials, energy, and other resources to third countries remains extremely substantial. We will oppose that in principle because, despite the fact that our prices will be free and liberal, the difference between the world level of prices for these energy carriers—in the first place oil, gas, and so on—will still be quite substantial; the second condition of principle, therefore, is that a coordinated export and import policy is essential for commodities which are the most currency-intensive and fundamental ones of all.

The third condition is a purely banking condition. [end recording]

[Shchelkunova] What is in prospect, among other things, is the exchange of information between the central banks of the former republics about the state of their finances and credits—the quantity of money in circulation, money in the form of balances, and so on. But Mashits did not in fact specify what the economic regime would be like with regard to those states which do not accept the conditions of the single economic space.

Overall, I have to say that he tried to avoid the acute issues like the Crimean problem, or whether it was true that Russia has stopped delivering oil to Estonia. Why? Because the press, the parliamentarians, or someone else whips up fresh conflicts at the wrong time and in the wrong circumstances, and they do so at the very time when one of the old sores is beginning to heal; and in doing so they hamper agreement. But the correspondents, nevertheless, of course managed to get an answer from him on the question about oil for Estonia. However, the minister said that there are stocks in Estonia. Deliveries are being resumed, however; the papers have been signed. It is simply that the supplies will get there shortly, but in general this is a purely technical matter involving the moving of papers. That was what he said.

With regard to the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Mashits voiced a fairly optimistic view: that the complexities of mutual nonunderstanding will end this year and that next year will already be more favorable. But [words indistinct] we heard a curious term—I do not know whether you have heard it—conflict inflation?

[Announcer] No, it is the first time I have heard it.

[Shchelkunova] Well, it means serious danger: the term refers to the chain reaction of imposing high prices upon one another. For example, when its partners put pressure on Russia via food prices, Russia is obliged to raise prices for energy carriers; consequently prices for equipment rise, and once again the spiral hits foodstuffs. This is what is meant by conflict inflation. This issue, as Mashits said about prices, must be discussed at the conference of Commonwealth heads of governments, which is expected to take place in Moscow on 7-8 February.

Well, it will be discussed, but will it be resolved? In this respect, Mashits was not so optimistic.

[Announcer] I think that that question should have been resolved when the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States was being concluded. These problems would not have arisen then.

[Shchelkunova] No, you are wrong, because then they reached agreement without realizing and without knowing what the level of present prices would be, and in general how these things would go. New agreements are, therefore, now being concluded, and new ties are being established.

[Announcer] Thank you.

Privatization, Price Changes Reviewed

PM2901121792 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS FAX DIGEST in English 28 Jan 92 pp 2-3

[Vladimir Orlov report: "Highlight of the Week: Headaches of the Russian Government"]

[Text] Yeltsin was full of hopes after the January 23 session and he signed the shelved documents giving the go-ahead to swift privatization, free trade and no customs duties on goods from other countries sent in by mail or brought by individuals. The past week made it clear what the government was going to do about "regulated" prices. Governments in the provinces, it was said on January 23, didn't on the whole object to lifting the ceiling on bread prices in the same way as was done with milk. Yeltsin promised not to hasten the matter. But according to government sources, prices for all types of bread are likely to be free as early as in February. What's more, there will be free prices for coal most likely by the end of March. While the general public doesn't care for coal as much as for food, the government pays the biggest subsidies for coal. Rumours continue in the government about the possible replacement of the Soviet rouble with a Russian rouble. However, Secretary of State Gennady Burbulis maintains: "We have no plans to issue Russian money. Russia could do it, of course, quite painlessly, but we have comitments under agreements with the Commonwealth states." He added then and there: "This would be a forced step for us." Sources inside the government confirm this view and say that the idea of a Russian rouble is being kept in mind. Credits and cash are now the government's biggest headache. There are encouraging signs: a hard currency stabilization fund of nearly 5 billion dollars will be set up in February. Experts think this and other steps may ensure that one rouble will sell for 25 dollars this coming fall. Talks with the IMF are moving more successfully than was expected, and tangible results may be in evidence in March. According to our sources, the government is going to focus on these issues early in February: pressing on with privatization, the distribution of Western humanitarian aid, preparations for the spring sowing and harvesting, and changes in its own structure.

Government Offers Statistics on Food Imports

OW3001132792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1111 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The anti-crisis group in parliament also discussed food imports. The deputy chairman of the State Committee for Trade Vadim Tikhonov said that this month the Russian Federation imported 10,000 tons [as received] of meat, 5,500 tons of sugar, 7,700 tons of butter.

To maintain the 1991 level of food consumption, according to the statistical service, Russia should import 25.3 mln [million] tons of grain, 3.4 mln tons of sugar, 880,000 tons of vegetable oils 1.6 mln tons of meat.

Speaking of credits offered by the West to Russia and the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Vadim Tikhonov said that Germany is giving a credit of 5 bn [billion] DM instead of the planned 22 bln DM. He accounted the reduction to political instability stemming from differences over the army and navy as well as the lack of progress on the issue of ethnic Germans in Russia. The statistical service expects a 17-20% drop in supplies of meat and dairy products and 40% drop in the supplies of vegetable oil.

The head of the State Committee for Grain Leonid Cheshinsky said that grain supplies in the first quarter of the year will be at a permissible level, but in the second 6-7 mln tons should be purchased additionally. He warned the session of possible tragedies in other countries of the Commonwealth because they did not sign sufficiently big grain contracts.

Trade Union Leader Cited on Reforms, Prices

LD3001111992 Moscow TASS in English 0904 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 30 ITAR-TASS—"There are no grounds for working people to hope for an improvement of their life soon," Arkadiy Solovyov, secretary of the Federation of the Independent Trade Unions of Russia, said in an interview published in RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA today.

Speaking of the non-planned soaring of prices, the trade union leader described as the main cause of this the fact that "the state followed the lead of monopoly enterprises." In addition, the state also decided to resolve budgetary problems and replenish the budget revenue to the utmost at the expense of the people, he said.

Solovyov pointed out that "the present reform has enabled monopoly producers to do without a market altogether and it has been successfully eliminated."

"It remains for us to pine for the primitive Gosplan-dominated system of material and technical supply which everyone strongly criticised but which is now an unattainable ideal," the trade union leader said.

"Trade unions have lodged a resolute protest with the government, seeking the alleviation of the lot of people in Russia," Solovyov said. He believes that in every work collective "it is essential to find possibilities to hold out, help the most needy and uphold workers' interests."

'Soyuzpechat' Blamed for Newspaper Prices

PM2901133192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 1

[Correspondent Lieutenant Colonel A. Vorobyev report: "Newspapermen of All Countries (CIS) [Commonwealth of Independent States], Unite?"]

[Text] Our readers should not be surprised about the forecast made by KRASNAYA ZVEZDA: It is quite likely that in the next month all central newspapers will disappear from "Soyuzpechat" kiosks in Moscow. Accordingly, Moscow's "Soyuzpechat" Production Association will be able to offer customers thrillers at 25-40 rubles [R] or disposable articles supplied by pharmaceutical administrations.

But the whole point is that the Moscow "Soyuzpechat" has currently given all central publications an ultimatum—either they sell copies of their newspapers at considerably increased prices or they will be refused access to retail sales. That is a free market for you!

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, as we have already reported, was the first newspaper on which this experiment was tried. It is being promised that it will not be sold after 1 February. A representative of our publishing house is supposed to sign a contract for a new price—R1.50-2.00. Many of our readers will not be able to afford that every day.

Here are the opinions of representatives of other publications:

R. Pisarenkova, chief of the TRUD Publishing House's Distribution Department:

"Yesterday 'Soyuzpechat' set us a new price of R2.43 per issue. Of course, few people could afford that. Clearly, we will refuse to retail TRUD through the capital's kiosks."

M. Troshin, deputy director of the "Pressa" Publishing House:

"We have already received an official request from 'Soyuzpechat.' We disagreed with the terms offered. Ordinary customers will be simply unable to buy PRAVDA at R3.16, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA at R2.30, SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA at R2.37, and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA at R2.14 from the capital's kiosks. Where will people get that kind of money if they do not have enough for food?.."

So, quite simply, it is a dramatic situation. By means of administrative diktat, the "Soyuzpechat" MGPO [expansion unknown] has set prices without taking any account of readers' interests. Clearly, under these conditions newspapermen have only one option, into which we are being forced—to unite in order to elaborate mutually acceptable measures. Of course, prices could rise, including prices for printed matter. But after all, customers have been buying newspapers at the new price since 1 January...

People Polled on Price Liberalization

OW3001081692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0634 GMT 30 Jan 92

["Viewpoint" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] **ATTITUDES TOWARDS PRICE LIBERALIZATION**

How do people react to free prices? According to the National Public Opinion Studies Center, in large cities 1 in 3 supports price liberalization, in small towns - 1 in 4, in villages - only 16% while more than two thirds are against it. Sociologists note that attitude toward price liberalization depends on sex, age, education and income of respondents. But proponents of free prices are not clear majority in any of the social groups. Most supporters of the government price policy are among men with high education and technical specialists. However, in these social groups there are as many supporters of price liberalization as its opponents (40-42%). These figures were provided by the National Public Opinion Studies center experts to the Data news agency.

The poll revealed that such demographic factor as sex plays a key role. Thus, among men 35% support the introduction of free prices and 48% disapprove of it, while among women only 18% favor price liberalization and 63% are against it.

Poll Shows Majority Support Economic Reforms

LD3001102592 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] A majority of the population continues to support the reforms launched in Russia despite the current difficulties. As the results of a poll ordered by the Russian National Bank show, 66 percent of the respondents feel that the transition to a market economy must be continued. Only 18 percent spoke for giving up the reforms, yet both the supporters and opponents of reforms admit that the growth of prices and the sharp decline in living standards have already assumed a disastrous scale. Nonetheless, many of them remain optimistic and are confident that they will be able to cope with the temporary difficulties.

Regional Affairs

Khasbulatov Interviewed on Yakutia Trip

LD2901202192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2205 GMT 28 Jan 92

[By special correspondent Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Yakutsk, 29 Jan (TASS)—Help from Russia in tackling Yakutia's complex economic problems is not only necessary but advantageous as well. To this end, Russia's supreme legislative body will support an active regional investment policy and adopt a necessary law concerning the problems of the north. Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, made this statement to a TASS correspondent before departing Yakutia.

He was giving a news conference on 28 January at the end of his working tour of this northern republic. According to Khasbulatov, changes in tax policy are also necessary. He expressed the hope here that parliament will act together with the federal government in tackling these matters.

Sharing his impressions of his stay in Yakutia, the head of the Russian parliament commented that the problems existing in this republic can be solved by joint efforts, which is traditional in a democracy. In Yakutia, both ordinary people and politicians are prepared for this. On the whole, in Ruslan Khasbulatov's opinion, there is a good atmosphere in the republic.

Speaking about the state of work on the draft of a new Russian constitution, the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet noted that as a result of active work by parliament and the constitutional commission, it has been possible recently to remove the main contradictions, especially those regarding the demarcation of functions. This work should be finally complete in time for the opening of the next Congress of People's Deputies in April, Khasbulatov said.

Khasbulatov refused to comment on the reasons for the Constitutional Court's revocation of one of the Russian president's decrees, saying that it has nothing to do with the realm of parliament's activities or those of its chairman. In Khasbulatov's view, criticism of the government is his undisputed right. A situation in which the leader of parliament does not criticize the government when necessary seems unnatural to him.

Speaking of the activities of the mass media, the Supreme Soviet chairman noted that the press and television quite often carry material which covers the activities of Russia's supreme body of power superficially and without objectivity. This creates an impression that certain journalists have declared war on their own state. Such actions, according to Khasbulatov, could, in conditions of a complex social situation, provoke an explosion which would strike first at precisely those who brought it nearer—the journalists.

Appealing to their sense of responsibility, the head of parliament gave assurances that journalists have no opponents in the Russian Supreme Soviet even though in the performance of his duty he personally has the occasion fairly frequently to criticize the workers of the press.

Urges 'Self-Critical' Stance

PM2901152792 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Jan 92 First Edition p 1

[Nikolay Belyy report: "Ruslan Khasbulatov: "People's High Degree of Forbearance Forces Us To Be Self-Critical"]

[Text] Yakutsk—The stay in Yakutia by the head of the Russian parliament continued 27-28 January. Ruslan Khasbulatov met with the republic leadership, the chairmen of rayon and city soviets, and the heads of local administration; visited the "Zoloto Yakutii" concern and the village of Khatassy; and got to know ancient Yakutsk, the capital of the northern kray.

As expected, Khasbulatov's meeting with parliamentarians in the Supreme Soviet generated the main interest. The people's elected representatives who had come for the session were already armed with draft decisions on a number of fundamental questions before the meeting.

Many, if not all, the questions were concerned with demarcating areas of jurisdiction and authority between federal institutions of power and republic organs of power. They touched on the full implementation of the Russian presidential decree on Yakutia's powers in disposing of natural resources and forming a gold reserve and the diamond and currency funds of the republic. The question was put point-blank: At least 11 percent of so-called refined precious metals produced in Yakutia should go into the funds, and settlements between the parties should be based on the level of world prices, converted at an agreed ruble rate. Other questions of equal importance to Yakutia and Russia were also raised: the development in the Far North of base sectors of the power industry, clearing up the aftermath of the secret nuclear explosions carried out in the transpolar area of the republic some years ago, and about the deadlock in targeted investments, as a result of which industrial regions expect an exodus of workers.

If anyone wished to put the visitor's composure to the test, he would only have seen for himself that the head of the Russian parliament retained his composure in Yakutia. Khasbulatov's dialogue with the auditorium was conducted in his characteristic "homespun" way, which has subdued rougher "parliamentary seas" than here in Yakutia. Khasbulatov's answers seemed to go down well with the local parliamentarians, who rewarded their guest with applause. The thrust of his answers was that Russia and Yakutia together must create a unified national economic complex in the north of Russia, giving priority to the consumer sector and radically changing the structure of the regional economy. Otherwise, he said, the changes and reforms are not worth a dime.

"We must have the courage to face people living in tough conditions," was Khasbulatov's parting advice to his colleagues. "Their high degree of forbearance forces us to be self-critical. Carrying out reforms at the cost of worsening their situation is immoral and dangerous," stressed Khasbulatov.

A news conference with republic journalists was the final official engagement. Khasbulatov returned from Yakutsk to Moscow by the same special plane immediately after the meeting.

Gold Industry Near 'Collapse'

PM2901125992 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Ruslan Khasbulatov in Yakutia"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] On 27 January R. Khasbulatov met leaders of enterprises in the republic's mining complex, visited Yakutsk City Soviet, toured new districts of the city, and talked with residents.

Gold extraction enterprises might stop work as of 9 February unless the Russian Government takes emergency measures to extricate the sector from the crisis. This was stated today by Taras Desyatkin, general director of the Zoloto Yakutii [Gold of Yakutia] concern, at a meeting between leaders of Yakut mining enterprises and the head of the Russian parliament.

The Zoloto Yakutii concern is one of the largest associations. But, as the result of a predatory tax policy, an artificially lowered purchase price for gold, a catastrophic rise in the prices of the material and equipment being supplied, and the social tension intensifying daily, Yakutia's gold extraction complex is on the verge of collapse, Taras Desyatkin believes. In his opinion, the stopping of enterprises in February is the only possible means of influencing the government.

The leader of the concern demanded that the Russian Government revise the purchase price of gold, bringing it up to a level comparable with world prices; amend the tax policy; and honor all its obligations to the sector's working people.

A trip by R. Khasbulatov to the village of Khatassy is planned for the afternoon. There he will discuss the problems of Yakutia's agriculture with representatives of the agro-industrial complex.

Gold Miners Stage Warning Strike

LD2901201292 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 28 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman] Ruslan Khasbulatov's trip to Yakutia has ended. He has declared that he is convinced that there are two errors in Russia's economic reforms: ignoring regional peculiarities and exaggerating our people's patience.

After seeing Khasbulatov off, the Zoloto Yakutii [Gold of Yakutia] concern staged a warning strike. The workers are calling for free gold prices. Otherwise they threaten to stop the mining of precious metals.

Urgal Miners, Novorossiysk Sailors Strike

LD2701145592 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 27 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Miners at the Urgal coal basin in the Far East stopped work for two hours today. They are demanding that pay be index-linked.

Seamen of the Novorossiysk shipping line, who have begun an indefinite strike, are demanding a minimum wage of 1,200 rubles plus $300.

Miners in the Donbass are so far refraining from striking but are threatening to seize control of all trading in coal.

Moscow Vice Mayor Assesses Food Situation

MK3001094292 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 5

[Yelena Tarasova interview with Moscow Vice Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov: "The Situation in the City Is Difficult But Not Hopeless"]

[Text] As we have already reported, Moscow Vice Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov spoke at a session of the Mossoviet [Moscow City Soviet] on 22 January. He described the economic situation in the city, discussed the goals that the new city administration named by the reform government has set for itself, and answered deputies' questions. The vice mayor declared that the situation in the city is difficult but not hopeless.

[Tarasova] What is the government's position and your own regarding the introduction of a rationing system in the city of Moscow?

[Luzhkov] Categorically opposed!

[Tarasova] Do you believe it necessary to publish lists of goods arriving in the city as humanitarian aid?

[Luzhkov] I have signed an order consolidating information on the arrival of humanitarian aid. We are prepared to share this information with the Mossoviet and to publish it weekly in terms of the quantity and assortment of humanitarian aid.

[Tarasova] The bread situation. What is the story? There is flour, the bakers have not disappeared, the bakeries are not under repair. Please explain.

[Luzhkov] I do not agree with the view that the city is in some sort of disastrous situation as regards the supply of bread. We currently produce and supply the distribution network with 2.5 tons of bread per day. This is our top capacity or close to it. And a word about unredeemed vodka coupons. The government is now examining this issue and what will be done about some of the promises we have given. The topic under discussion is full compensation for those who have been unable to redeem their coupons for sugar and vodka. We will decide.

[Tarasova] How is the mayor enforcing the Mossoviet's decree forbidding the sale of humanitarian aid?

[Luzhkov] I believe the Mossoviet's decree forbidding the sale of humanitarian aid was a mistake. Humanitarian aid takes many forms. Humanitarian aid that by quantity and packaging can be distributed directly to individual citizens cannot be sold. Humanitarian aid in parcels and large packages, such as dried milk, we send to dairy industry enterprises by agreement with the EC Commission and under the control of specialists and representatives of European countries. This dried milk is then reconstituted as a normal liquid or used in sour-milk products and sold, with the proceeds going to the Moscow Social Defense Fund. This arrangement suits everyone and is, I believe, a rational one.

[Tarasova] What about the problem of social protection for families with pre-schoolers? Officially sponsored kindergartens and nurseries have raised their prices sharply for children of non-employees.

[Luzhkov] It now costs 1,300 rubles per month to keep a child in a municipal kindergarten. We are aware of agencies starting to restore their finances at the expense of "outside" children, and this is the solution: We will demand that these official kindergartens set aside 10-15 percent of their spaces for the city's needs, since we provide them with city services. There are also cases where a parent's enterprise cannot provide for a child and another solution must be found, such as transferring the children to municipal kindergartens. Unfortunately, I must immediately add a proviso: We will do this where possible.

[Tarasova] What has the government done to provide meals for school children in grades 4 to 11?

[Luzhkov] Despite the fact that we are very aware of the difficulty of a situation where breakfast costs five rubles and lunch 10, we cannot yet provide free meals for children in the upper grades. If there is even the slightest possibility that we will have the resources to do this, we will take care of this problem as well.

[Tarasova] Please tell us what emergency measures are envisaged, and within what time frames, in order to provide pregnant and nursing women with medically recommended amounts of food, medicines, vitamins, and so on. We are talking about the preservation of our gene pool.

[Luzhkov] I promise to examine this issue in the near future in order to ensure that those who fall within these categories are able to buy dairy products.

[Tarasova] How will imported foodstuffs be handled once stores and wholesalers are privatized? How will prices for these foodstuffs be determined?

[Luzhkov] The answer to that is very simple. They will be sold on the wholesale market; wholesalers will sell them to private stores or to any other type of store. It is not necessary to devise some other mechanism.

[Tarasova] With food shortages, accelerated privatization of stores will lead to vendor tyranny. What will be done to protect consumers from this?

[Luzhkov] There should be (but there is not yet) a mechanism for influencing this type of private shopkeeper or vendor. These things should be stipulated in business licenses, the text and form of which are now being worked out, and in rules that the city should definitely have.

[Tarasova] Much of the food that arrives in stores never appears for sale, but rather gets syphoned off by employees. How does the government intend to combat this?

[Luzhkov] This needs to be controlled, in part with the help of deputies from the rayon soviets and the Mossoviet. The city government is now taking measures to significantly strengthen the inspection and control service along the lines of the staff and taxation inspectorate of the former OBKhSS [Department for Countering Embezzlement of Socialist Property]. A new service is being formed to investigate these sorts of outrages.

[Tarasova] Where are goods produced in Moscow disappearing to? They are not on the shelves.

[Luzhkov] I already mentioned that last year the volume of goods produced dropped by approximately 10-15 percent, so if there were shortages before, 1991 did not correct this. Cooperatives, the division of labor, and reciprocal deliveries continue. This issue is now being dealt with much less effectively, and this explains the situation with our consumer market.

[Tarasova] If the situation continues to develop unfavorably, is the government prepared to commit a large portion of its resources to social protection by halting certain kinds of capital investments?

[Luzhkov] I think that if we decide such a situation is developing in our consumer market, steps will have to be taken at the cost of freezing some of our programs in order to devote resources to the realization of these measures.

Leningrad Television Reorganized

LD2701170492 Moscow KOMMERSANT in Russian No 4, 20-27 Jan 92 p 23

[Sergey Samoshin article: "Anatoliy Sobchak Had His Own Channel for Two Weeks"]

[Text] **Funding for the new "Petersburg" telecompany should begin in the near future. On 21 January the Committee on Mass Media of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation recommended to parliament that 47 million rubles be allocated to the company for the first quarter of 1992. However, the process of forming the company cannot be considered complete, as the mutual relations of its founders have not been fully established.**

On 2 January Mikhail Poltoranin, Yegor Yakovlev, and Anatoliy Sobchak signed an order eliminating the St. Petersburg branch of the former VGTRK [All-Union State Radio and Television Company] and formed the joint-stock company "St. Peterburg." The Ministry of the Press and Information and the mayor were named its founders. The order did not meet with understanding on the part of the telecompany's work collective, as its participation in the company was not stipulated, and moreover, the telecompany had become wholly subordinate to the mayor. Employees of the telecompany claim that the draft of the order was prepared in secret.

On 14 January, on the eve of Boris Yeltsin's visit to St. Petersburg, members of the work collective of St. Petersburg TV went on strike. On 15 January the president of the Russian Federation signed a decree creating the Russian State Television and Radio Company "Petersburg" and abolishing the "St. Petersburg" Television and Radio Company created on 2 January. This time the founders were designated to be the work collective of the "Petersburg" telecompany (Yeltsin himself placed them first on the list of founders), the Ministry of the Press, the mayor of St. Petersburg, and the oblast administration. The Russian airwaves are now divided between three independent telecompanies: "Ostankino," "All-Russian," and the "Petersburg" company.

Coordination of the new company's programming and technical policies, as its chairman Viktor Yugin told KOMMERSANT's correspondent, has been entrusted to a supervisory council which includes representatives of the founders and of legislative and executive organs of power. It is anticipated that the company will become a joint-stock company at the end of the year with the participation of bankers, exchanges, and Western investors.

Yugin admits that the company does not yet have a well-defined development plan, and the relative shares that the founders will contribute to its capitalization are also yet to be determined. According to independent observers, assigning these shares could result in new conflicts in the near future.

The "Petersburg" telecompany has approximately 3,000 employees and the (net?) [balansovaya] worth of its assets is around 320 million rubles. Eighteen hours of broadcasting is planned per day, reaching approximately 70 percent of Russian territory in addition to the Baltic States.

Commission To Control Food Aid Distribution

LD2901002492 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2100 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] A unified committee formed by Mayor Sobchak to control the distribution of foodstuffs entering St. Petersburg from the European Economic Community will begin work today. The commission's job is to ensure the transportation and safe keeping of supplies and to see that they reach the shops. As well as EEC experts, the commission also includes representatives from the city administration for internal affairs and army officers.

Tatarstan Official Advocates Neutrality

OW3001001892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] In view of the disintegration of the former USSR's Armed Forces, sovereign Tatarstan must observe military and political neutrality, said Fanda Safiullin, member of the Tatar Supreme Soviet's Presidium, over republican TV. He said he and a group of his colleagues would submit the issue for parliamentary discussion.

Mr. Safiullin told IF [INTERFAX] that he felt it was "inexpedient" to have Tatar youths do their military service in the armed forces of independent states. In his view, citizens of Tatarstan should serve in the Commonwealth military units under centralized command on Tatar territory, as well as in the republican interior troops, and take part in guarding the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] borders.

National Affairs

Kravchuk Speaks on Reform, Power, CIS

LD2901161892 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 2200 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Ukrainian parliament gathered for its new session in Kiev today. It will study and possibly solve 130 issues on the agenda. It includes a full package of laws in the field of economy and a number of legislative acts related to the armed forces. The parliament faces many problems, and the most painful is the growing dissatisfaction of the people with the power. Addressing the parliament today, Leonid Kravchuk, who is the president of the Ukraine, said the people are losing faith in the authorities' ability to change things for the better. That was a key point in today's debate in parliament. Here is an account of what happened really during the first session of parliament today:

The parliament building was picketed by miners from Donbass, Afghanistan war veterans, as well as by members of the All-Ukrainian Workers Associations. Delegates of these groups were invited to speak before members of parliament. Viktor Levin, spokesman for the miners, said that the coal miners of Donbass will not go on strike if their demands are satisfied. He also added that if the government should resign, the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, that is, parliament, will also have to go, as the legislators are responsible for both the cabinet's [word indistinct] and its activity. (Yuriy Ritkomon) of the Ukrainian Association of Afghan Veterans has announced an appeal to the Supreme Soviet. He urged the parliament to pass a law on the status and social protection of veterans of the war in Afghanistan. Next, Andrey Vashenko, who represented the All-Ukrainian Workers Association, said the Cabinet of Ministers, headed by Vitold Fokin, undermines the idea of building an independent Ukraine and discredits the concept of a market economy.

President of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk spoke to parliament today. He formulated his policy on the economic reform, the problems of power, and formation of the Ukrainian armed forces. Leonid Kravchuk underlined that the formation of Ukrainian statehood is realized amid complicated political economic and international conditions. The economic crisis is getting deeper and affects science, education, and culture.

Leonid Kravchuk said the following: The government structures are often unable to guarantee a transition to new types of management and more radical economic reform. We are now facing a strange situation: We discuss problems, we adopt adequate resolutions, but we don't take decisive steps to implement our own decisions, sometimes because of the absence of legal grounds for such resolute actions. A number of facts testify that at this very important stage of our lives local soviets have lost their links with the people. What is worse, many officials do not take the responsibility for their own actions and slow down the reforms.

Leonid Kravchuk further said: We have to set up economic institutions of the sovereign Ukrainian state and, at the same time, proceed to the new market economy, which is quite different from what we had before. The recent measures by the government were forced by Russian reforms and were not prepared in advance. This doesn't make any of the government's responsibility smaller. The cabinet showed lack of competence, inability to analyze the situation and draw up a (?sensitive) prognosis, as well as slow and inefficient management decisions. We must admit poor organization in the government agencies. Many state-owned enterprises have taken advantage of their monopoly in the economy, lack of competition, and the fact that supply is very scarce. They began to overprice their products, impoverishing their own people. Some enterprises increased their profit by 400 to 500 percent. We should admit that we failed to create a government of national accord, a government which would enjoy wide public support. Is then the question of the government's resignation relevant today? I don't think, said the president of the Supreme Soviet, we would be able to appoint a new prime minister without (?discussion).

Who would benefit today from the government's resignation? I don't think it would benefit anyone. But we'll have to be cautious and wise so as to fill the key positions in government with the new people who showed their loyalty to the Ukrainian cause and who are able to protect the people of the Ukraine and to fulfill the deep market economy reforms. Both the president and the prime minister are ready to take such steps.

The parliament has to make the decision according to which the president will be vested with the power to create such structures and to bring into leading government positions people who would be able to complete the market reforms. I would like to be frank with you, saying that I have no reason not to trust Prime Minister Vitold Fokin.

Then Leonid Kravchuk addressed the problem of relations between the Ukraine and Russia, dwelling upon the problem of signing the treaty on economic relations. According to one of its provisions, a refusal to sign the contract on product supply envisaged by the treaty, those who refuse will be punished with a fine that is 10 times higher than the total price of the contract. [sentence as heard] [passage indistinct]

Leonid Kravchuk also spoke about the role of the Ukraine in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Collaboration with other member states, said Leonid Kravchuk, will not deprive Ukrainians of independence. However, we do not want the Commonwealth to be turned into a single state. Leonid Kravchuk in part said: The Ukraine is not encroaching on the national interests of other member states. We regard the Commonwealth as an institution of equal settlement of interests among the partners. [passage indistinct]

I would like to underline the need to constitutionally solve the question of granting the president authority that would enable him to guarantee that laws are abided by and that he might make radical decisions in the interests of the nation and serve as a guarantor of people's rights and freedoms. In my opinion, said President Kravchuk, the constitution should define a group of ministries and central agencies of state control that would make up the cabinet, including the chief executive and other [words indistinct] by the president. The president will appoint leaders of these governing bodies, in part the prime minister, with the consent of the parliament. The consititution should provide the president with the right to pass decrees on issues not currently defined by the legislature for a certain period of time and also on problems regulated by law. This includes the legal basis for economic reform. This authority is offered only for a transitional period, before the new constitution is adopted.

Today, after the discussion of the presidential address, the parliament of the Ukraine passed a resolution on a new national flag—the yellow and blue flag.

Outlines Goals, Nuclear-Free Status

AU2901141392 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian No. 1, Jan 92 pp 1,2

[Interview with President Leonid Kravchuk by special correspondent Valeriy Dzhyhun in Alma-Ata; date not given: "President of the Ukraine: 'I Believe in This....'"]

[Text] Yet another page in our history has been turned. The year 1991, so rich in events, is now in the past. Everything that we "sowed" then will "sprout" in the future. The Ukraine proclaimed its independence and ... became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Isn't there a contradiction in this? What is in store for us and our young state at this difficult time? URYADOVYY KURYER asked President Leonid Kravchuk to answer these questions.

Independent—Within Commonwealth?

[Kravchuk] What has the Ukraine gained by joining the Commonwealth of Independent States? First, people became reassured. Many people were worried: "What is going to happen when we part?" Second, you know, if we had not found a new formula for coexistence, I'll tell you frankly, if Russia, Belarus, and other republics had signed the Novo-Ogarevo document, we would have been isolated. It is naive to think that on the next day we would have found new partners, especially economic ones, and that timber, oil, and gas would have materialized right away, and that we would have been able to pay for all of this. It is not so. We had been thinking all along of how to maintain the existing ties, but in an entirely new form. How to be an independent state and not to drift apart in the economic and other spheres. I am convinced that much will change in one or two years. We will have our markets not only in the East but also in the West and in the Near East. This is completely natural. Russia will establish new economic contacts and so will the others. We cannot remain confined to the Commonwealth alone, but will establish broad relations with other countries. We will also develop bilateral interstate relations within the framework of the Commonwealth. For example, with regard to questions of nuclear weapons, four, not 11, countries have signed an agreement. With regard to space, three states—the Ukraine, Russia, and Kazakhstan—will sign documents. That is to say, there will be more narrow relations among the "11" within the Commonwealth itself. Our state will make its own decisions about which countries it will establish contacts with and in which spheres. This is a normal process, a normal democratic process of an independent state.

A Cherished Dream

Most of all, I would like to see a Ukraine free of nuclear weapons. I am convinced that today it is absurd to think that someone may be restrained by force. The formula "he who is strong will be reckoned with" refers to sports. In politics, force does not always gain the upper hand—more frequently it loses. Reason, balance, and a realistic approach win. If we take into account the fact that there are so many nuclear plants on our land, we do not need any missiles. We managed to sign an agreement in Alma-Ata in accordance with which the nuclear states—the Ukraine, Russia, and Kazakhstan [names of states as published]—will, by 1 July, remove the tactical nuclear weapons from their territories for dismantling. These are thousands of units. The world has started to regard us as a country that has embarked upon the road of nuclear disarmament and that does not want to engage in warfare. This is a good example for other states to follow.

What Is in Store for the Ukraine?

I am convinced that we have embarked upon the right road. This road will be complicated and difficult for us. We lived under a system (not only socialist—this is clear) where everything was done to produce a common pie. This pie was divided in Moscow and not by us. How much was the Ukraine given? It was up to Moscow. We have now embarked upon a road where we will bake our own pie and eat it ourselves. Our potential, capacity for work, rich land, and human wealth—both spiritual and professional (I am not exaggerating)—will enable us to become a wealthy and civilized state. I believe in this, and it will be so. Of course, we will have to live through difficult days, months, and years. We must face the truth and not expect that everything will easily change for the better. Only we ourselves will be able to do something. It might be better to tell the people that life will become better tomorrow. I would like to say so, but I cannot. It will be very difficult, and this is the truth.

Fokin Concerned About USSR Debt Servicing

LD3001102492 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0800 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin has expressed anxiety at the actions of Russia, Belarus, and

Kazakhstan on servicing the foreign debt of the former USSR. According to an INTERFAX report, Fokin proposes that Russia's right to the property of the former USSR abroad should be suspended until it is actually divided. According to Fokin, the Ukraine cannot agree to the diktat of one country, however large its potential. He proposes the idea of the convocation of an international convention in Kiev with the participation of creditors of the former USSR.

Plyushch Explains Commanders' Replacement

PM2901140992 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 1

[Correspondent Colonel A. Polyakov report: "Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk Appoints New District Commanders"]

[Excerpt] Kiev—[passage omitted] On the evening of 27 January, answering a question at a news conference about the reason why three commanders had been replaced simultaneously, Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Chairman I. Plyushch said that the Ukrainian leadership does not consider it possible for the districts' troops to be commanded by military leaders appointed by the leadership of a different state. Talking about the problems of the Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet, I. Plyushch noted that the tension there is not the Ukraine's fault. We will never revise the existing borders between republics, he stressed, and we will decide the fate of the fleet solely by negotiation.

Lvov Officers on KGB Security Role

AU3001105292 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 16 Jan 92 p 1

[Statement in Russian by the Lvov Oblast organization of the Officers Union of the Ukraine; date not given: "The National Security Service—Into Reliable Hands!"]

[Text] As a result of the events of August 1991, the process of sociopolitical transformation has markedly accelerated. Only three months ago, when the Lvov Oblast organization of the Officers Union of the Ukraine was formed, its goals were perceived by many simply as slogans and declarations. However, over the short period of time that has elapsed since then, radical changes have taken place: The USSR has ceased to exist, the KGB has been abolished, and guarantors of Ukrainian independence have begun to be created—the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the National Security Service.

The Ukrainian National Security Service is based upon the former KGB, and rightly so. Unfortunately, however, negative aspects of this variant of reform have already come to manifest themselves. In this connection the words of V. Chornovil, chairman of the Lvov Oblast Council of People's Deputies, in his speech during the opening of the recent oblast council session sounded quite to the point: "We have grounds to believe that the former KGB has been doing everything to resist attempts to renew its leadership and introduce new people into it. This repressive department has only formally changed its signboard."

When only quite recently members of the Officers Union of the Ukraine—employed by the department of military counterintelligence in the Ciscarpathian [as published] Military District—called upon their colleagues to support the idea of Ukrainian independence and to make their own contribution to the process of formation of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the National Security Service, some representatives of the department, including those from its leadership, adamantly opposed this idea. The members of the Officers Union of the Ukraine began to be criticized and accused of timeserving and of an alleged attempt to break up the collective. At the same time, they were called upon to limit their activity to resolving purely economic and domestic questions and "not to put the cart in front of the horse," but to quietly wait until a corresponding command is given.

However, while the giving of the command is delayed, active cadre changes are under way within the framework of the old structures of the former KGB. On the eve of the review of professional credentials and of swearing allegiance to the people of the Ukraine, the adherents of the "only and indivisible" are urgently appointing to key positions those persons who share their views and those who were quite recently vehemently struggling against "the so-called democrats." These appointments are still based upon personal devotion, subjectiveness, and subservience, without taking into account public opinion.

At the same time, they are nurturing plans to disseminate wittingly fabricated materials of biased character with regard to those persons who have shown themselves as supporters of democratic transformations with a view to compromising them.

We, members of the Officers Union of the Ukraine, are decisively against launching any "witch-hunt." However, we find it impossible to reconcile ourselves to a situation in which newly created structures of the Security Service of our young and independent state will turn out to be under the domination of unscrupulous opportunists and especially those whose files list "active assistance given to the Ukrainian Communist Party oblast committee in combating destructive elements" among their "merits."

Otherwise, such a guarantor of statehood as the Ukrainian National Security Service will turn out to be fake.

Nuclear Scientist Exposes Chernobyl 'Lie'

AU2801203692 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 27 Jan 92 pp 151-161

[Interview with Ukrainian nuclear scientist Vladimir Chernosenko by an unidentified reporter; place and date not given: "We Are Killing You Very Quietly"]

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Chernosenko, you were in the immediate surroundings of the Chernobyl reactor from May 1986, immediately after the disaster occurred, until November 1986, when the sarcophagus was finished—that is about eight months. How much radiation were you exposed to?

[Chernosenko] My legs are most heavily affected with 650 rem. Since I knew that my body would not be exposed to uniform radiation, I attached several dosimeters to my clothes on various parts of the body at the beginning.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is the radiation quantity you mentioned based on estimates, or is it the sum of all measured dosimeter values?

[Chernosenko] The political leadership decided at the time that every person involved in the cleanup work should only be exposed to a radiation of 25 rem. Then they had to leave the site. To be able to stay there, the three of us who were mainly responsible—Yuriy Samoilenko, the director of the special group; the technical manager Victor Golubev; and myself, the scientific director—decided not to record the radiation doses to which we were exposed.

[DER SPIEGEL] Hundreds of thousands of people were ordered to participate in the cleanup work. Were the radiation doses to which they were exposed recorded?

[Chernosenko] This is a very difficult question. Basically, radiation control should be given priority when clearing up a nuclear catastrophe, and it should be organized in an optimum way so that the health risks remain within an acceptable limit. In Chernobyl those affected only realized long after the explosion why such a control was carried out very insufficiently or not at all.

Because there were no controls during the work, later, when people started to be sick or when they died, the dose of 2 rem per day was assumed for every worker, even if they had been exposed to 100 rem.

[DER SPIEGEL] Two rem was the highest permissible amount. Are you saying that 2 rem were recorded, no matter to what dose people were really exposed?

[Chernosenko] Yes.

[DER SPIEGEL] Can you describe the effects of radiation on the body?

[Chernosenko] Very strong radiation first affects the cardiovascular system. The coronary vessels are damaged first, and later the internal organs, such as the kidneys. A strong and vital person becomes weak and tired if he is exposed to strong radiation. Angiospasms cause terrible headaches. When the legs are affected and the vessels of the legs, a thrombosis may occur. One feels like his legs are being clamped by a vise.

[DER SPIEGEL] How do you feel now?

[Chernosenko] Occasionally I feel quite normal. Then I am surprised that I am still alive. In addition to external radiation, radionuclides entered my body. All who participated in the cleanup work breathed toxic plutonium, which has a long half-life period. The masks that we used sometimes do not filter plutonium.

[DER SPIEGEL] Against what were the masks supposed to protect you?

[Chernosenko] They were supposed to protect us from the radionuclides in the air. Since the active zone of the reactor was completely destroyed, an immense quantity of radionuclides was released into the atmosphere. During the catastrophe, all reactor elements, which contained plutonium, were destroyed, too. Those carrying out the cleanup work breathed plutonium that was not kept away by the masks. They damaged their gastrointestinal tract when they swallowed the plutonium, and they frequently get ulcers.

[DER SPIEGEL] On photographs and in television films, workers wearing lead jackets and protective suits were seen.

[Chernosenko] The primitive forms of protection to which we had to resort during the cleanup work did not ensure the required protection. Suitable protective clothing was not available in the whole country.

[DER SPIEGEL] Does this mean that you did not wear protective clothing during these eight months?

[Chernosenko] Protective clothing is a fiction. As a nuclear scientist I know that very well. In the most favorable case, it might reduce radiation to two-thirds or half of the original dose. However, we were dealing with fields of 10,000 to 15,000 rem per hour...

[DER SPIEGEL] ...against which the best protection is useless.

[Chernosenko] Our protection was a mere fig leaf, because even two-thirds or half of the original dose would still be too much. I decided at the time that it might be better to move quickly in this area with such intensive radiation than—impeded by clothing—to stagger like a teddy bear.

[DER SPIEGEL] Would it have been possible to reduce the damage caused by radiation if more Western technology had been available?

[Chernosenko] Yes, of course. This is another tragic point about which we are still worried. Until the super maximum credible Chernobyl accident occurred, we believed that the further development of nuclear energy would be accompanied by the development of the required protective equipment and measures for emergency situations. However, when the nuclear catastrophe took place and we asked the West for help, we discovered that the West had made as little effort to further develop protection measures as the East.

[DER SPIEGEL] German companies sent remote-control robot vehicles.

[Chernosenko] Yes, but when the robots entered the radiation area, they immediately failed, just like the other robots, because their electronic system collapsed.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you think that the same thing would have happened during a comparable accident in Germany?

[Chernosenko] Yes, of course.

[DER SPIEGEL] Would it have been advisable to clear Chernobyl, shut down the remaining reactors, and leave the whole area unpopulated for decades?

[Chernosenko] Yes, that would have been the only right decision. I am firmly convinced that the wrong decision to go ahead with Chernobyl as though nothing disastrous had happened initiated Gorbachev's fall.

Gorbachev failed to withstand the pressure of the international and Soviet nuclear mafia. Instead of concentrating all measures and resources on saving the millions of people who were affected, he did everything possible to play down the catastrophe as an incident. For this reason, international attention was drawn to the repair of the reactor ruin. The ruin no longer posed a danger because the core of the reactor had exploded.

[DER SPIEGEL] The reactor covered by the sarcophagus no longer poses a danger?

[Chernosenko] I do not think so. This can be compared with the explosion of an atomic bomb. After the explosion everything is over.

On the other hand, however, I am certain that 1 million people have died or will die a completely pointless death. I am talking about the 1 million people who participated in the cleanup work within the 30-km danger area. Many of these people are now becoming sick or are already sick, and are dying in ever-increasing numbers.

[DER SPIEGEL] In your most recent book, you mentioned 5,000-7,000 deaths among those who cleaned up.

[Chernosenko] This is the lowest estimate.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you believe that all who were involved in the cleanup work—about 1 million people—will die early?

[Chernosenko] My statement to this effect was taken badly by the Soviet Ministry for Nuclear Energy. According to official indications, 650,000 people were in the danger zone around Chernobyl. About 5,000 of them have died in the past five years, which corresponds to the statistical average in the Soviet Union. Thus, no increased mortality rate because of harmful radiation is to be observed, official reports used to point out.

This calculation is based on a trick: Mortality among the normal population is used as standard of comparison. However, mostly young people worked in the 30-km zone around Chernobyl. Most of them were 19 or 20 years old, who would normally have lived another 40 years. If the mortality rate is as high there as among the normal population with many old people, this is an alarming sign.

[DER SPIEGEL] Are many of the young people dying?

[Chernosenko] One can see now that they began to die after two or three years. Everybody knows the cause. If a 20-year-old person was exposed to a dose of 300 rem and inhaled or swallowed plutonium-containing dust, his organism is bound to be destroyed.

[DER SPIEGEL] Those involved in the cleanup work came from numerous parts of the Soviet Union and went back to their homes after the work was finished. Are their children likely to suffer genetic damage?

[Chernosenko] Yes, this applies particularly to very young soldiers; 19- and 20-year-olds were called up, people who should engender the next generation. This generation is in danger.

[DER SPIEGEL] Has a research project been initiated to investigate the consequences?

[Chernosenko] This is another tragedy. The people involved in the cleanup work were handed over a document—some kind of document acknowledging their work—by the military. At the same time, the recipients were forbidden to mention details concerning their work and the area where they worked to make it completely impossible in the event of radiation sickness to ascertain the radiation dose to which they were exposed. People were simply sent home where they are slowly dying in silence.

[DER SPIEGEL] Are the people who participated in the cleanup work under medical supervision? Does the health system provide the required personnel and equipment?

[Chernosenko] There is nothing at all. There was only one special hospital in the whole country—Hospital No. 6 in Moscow—where it was possible to treat radiation victims. Before the Chernobyl disaster, people were treated there who had been exposed to nuclear radiation in nuclear submarines or nuclear power plants. This hospital in Moscow was the only such medical institution in the country until 1986.

[DER SPIEGEL] The knowledge of the physicians working there was probably very exclusive.

[Chernosenko] Yes, all information concerning the victims of the first test involving the explosion of atomic bombs and the victims of numerous accidents on submarines, which were hidden from the West, was gathered and kept under lock and key there. For this reason, the medical personnel, physicians, and nurses in the remaining Soviet Union were not informed at all about how to deal with radiation-related diseases.

[DER SPIEGEL] How many beds are there in Hospital No. 6?

[Chernosenko] It was a tiny hospital with maximally 60 beds.

[DER SPIEGEL] Were you treated there as well?

[Chernosenko] I was taken to Moscow on 4 January 1987 aboard a special plane and treated together with other radiation victims who had worked in Chernobyl.

[DER SPIEGEL] Have special hospitals been built for the Chernobyl victims?

[Chernosenko] A center for radiation victims was established in Kiev because this area was most heavily affected. Specialists from the sphere of sports medicine work at this hospital. Until that point, specialists for the treatment of radiation sickness did not exist officially.

[DER SPIEGEL] Who treats the patients in Kiev?

[Chernosenko] Brave doctors are working there who try to help without knowing what radiation sickness is.

[DER SPIEGEL] After the disaster, most of the politicians and numerous scientists in the former Soviet Union apparently tried to play down or keep secret the consequences.

[Chernosenko] This impression is correct. From the first moment, officials tried to play down the problems.

[DER SPIEGEL] You belong to a group of scientists who also accuse the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] of minimizing the incident. In your view, to what extent were events played down and kept secret?

[Chernosenko] I believe that the public was misled on three levels. At the first level of the lie, the Soviet nuclear mafia was active. Its members did not provide complete and precise information to their own government.

[DER SPIEGEL] Who belongs to this nuclear mafia? The members of the Academy of Sciences or the energy experts of the former Soviet Union?

[Chernosenko] It is necessary to say a few words about the Soviet nuclear mafia. Traditionally, there was a division within the government between the representatives of pure science and those responsible for nuclear science. On the one hand, there was an enormous industry that worked completely secretly, and on the other there were the scientists who had no access to the data.

The economic group was headed by the KGB chief. It supported by various scientific and technical institutes. Thus, some institutes worked for the nuclear mafia, and some for pure science. Those who worked in public belonged to the Academy of Sciences, the others were subject to the security apparatus of the government.

[DER SPIEGEL] There were no clashes of interests?

[Chernosenko] Of course there were. The nuclear scientist Anatoliy Aleksandrov, for example, was the chairman of the Academy of Sciences and head of the Kurchatov Institute in Moscow, which was especially founded for the development of nuclear weapons. The type of reactor that exploded in Chernobyl was developed there later. [sentence as published]

[DER SPIEGEL] Thus, the civilian and military nuclear industry are closely intertwined?

[Chernosenko] Yes. The Soviet nuclear mafia was or is a state within the state and had great influence on the state and the government. This nuclear mafia also started the series of deceits in the case of Chernobyl. The nuclear mafiosi provided the government with wrong information on the causes, wrong information on the extent, and wrong information on the consequences of the catastrophe—and on the methods and opportunities to cope with it.

[DER SPIEGEL] Can you explain that?

[Chernosenko] The nuclear mafia knew of the political predicament in which the Soviet Government was because of the catastrophe. To protect the government, the data were dressed up and manipulated. For example, the enormous areas that had been radioactively contaminated were simply reduced by the factor 100.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you believe that former President Gorbachev, the inventor of glasnost and perestroyka, knew that he was giving wrong information to the Soviet public?

[Chernosenko] Yes, he knew more than he publicly admitted. I would like to stress once again that, in my opinion, the political debacle of Gorbachev as a person started with the Chernobyl accident in 1986. With his wrong information, he disappointed, so to speak, all the hopes of the people in the Soviet Union.

[DER SPIEGEL] Then the already dressed-up information was conveyed to the IAEA in Vienna and once again played down there?

[Chernosenko] This was the third level of the deceit; this time it was international. For the experts in the nuclear group in Vienna are educated people...

[DER SPIEGEL] ... who should have realized that they were being deceived?

[Chernosenko] One has to accuse these people because it would have been easy for them to check the facts, and then they should have known that they were being deceived. They should have acted at once. For example, they should have demanded the immediate closing of the remaining Chernobyl blocks and all other reactors of this type. Reactors of this type that are still in operation are a danger to the whole world, and this has not changed.

[DER SPIEGEL] As shown by experience, criticism of international organizations like the IAEA is not particularly successful.

[Chernosenko] This is correct. It also has to be recalled that Hans Blix, a former foreign minister of Sweden, sits in the Presidium of the authority. Blix knew very well that an immediate halt of operations in Chernobyl would have strongly undermined the confidence in the international nuclear industry. Blix also acted as a politician who uses tactics.

[DER SPIEGEL] As a representative of the nuclear lobby?

[Chernosenko] Yes. On 8 May Mr. Blix was in Chernobyl and went around in a helicopter. He must have known that at this moment many million curie of radioactive nucleids were being spread over the whole world. Instead, he told the world public after his circuit flight that everything was completely under control and there were no problems at all.

[DER SPIEGEL] Did you talk to Mr. Blix?

[Chernosenko] I did not meet Mr. Blix personally, but I did meet his colleague, IAEA security expert Morris Rosen. After the catastrophe, he took the view that nuclear energy must also be advanced if a Chernobyl catastrophe happens every year.

At the news conference in Kiev I asked Mr. Rosen in public how he could justify such a statement. He gave me his answer after the news conference; Rosen took me aside and warned me: Refrain from asking such questions in the future, otherwise the people will tear me apart limb by limb.

[DER SPIEGEL] That is to say, in your opinion, the international nuclear lobby is firmly integrated within this graduated system of lies?

[Chernosenko] Of course, it was very, very convenient for these people that the Soviet report on the investigations put the main blame on the operating staff and claimed that the concurrence of completely abnormal conditions caused this situation. A cynical message to mankind is hidden behind such dealings: Sleep easy, we are killing you very quietly.

[DER SPIEGEL] In the former Soviet Union 15 reactors of the Chernobyl type are still in operation. In your opinion, how great is the danger that emanates from these reactors, which have been slightly improved in the meantime?

[Chernosenko] After the latest accident, I am sure that this is clear. Last September during the fire in reactor block two the same as in 1986 almost happened. If these reactors are not finally closed down now, three to four accidents of this kind will have to be expected by 2000, according to the results of Russian and American investigations.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you think that it is possible to reequip the Chernobyl reactors with Western technology, so that they are safe?

[Chernosenko] Even Western technology cannot turn a saurian into Brigitte Bardot.

[DER SPIEGEL] Not even with the calculated sum of 4 billion Deutsche marks [DM]?

[Chernosenko] I think that better things could be done with the money. Actually, these reactors cannot be changed. As early as in the planning stage, 32 deviations from the official norms on safety from radiation were permitted. Two-thirds of these mistakes cannot be corrected in principle. Moreover, the reactors of the Chernobyl type have a far larger active zone where chain reactions take place than the compact Western reactors. This makes the operation of the reactor very difficult.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you think that, in view of the developments in the former Soviet Union, the danger that a new Hiroshima will be caused by Soviet nuclear weapons is greater than the danger of a new Chernobyl-type catastrophe caused by reactors?

[Chernosenko] I think that these reactors are more dangerous than nuclear weapons. I also think that the consequences of a catastrophe in such a block are more far-reaching and dangerous than the dropping of a Hiroshima bomb. In the Chernobyl explosion 520 different radioactive nucleids were released, among them such long-lived ones as plutonium. Its effect is more terrible than the explosion of a nuclear bomb.

[DER SPIEGEL] For the collection of all medical and radiological data concerning the consequences of Chernobyl, the "All-Union Institute" was established in Kiev. Who has access to these data?

[Chernosenko] Unfortunately, only very few organizations and accordingly few people.

[DER SPIEGEL] There are German scientists who fear that these data will be given to the IAEA and be only published there in a censored form or that the present director of the All-Union Institute will sell these documents to the IAEA.

[Chernosenko] I share these views. It is urgently necessary, and I want to call for the establishment of an independent international ecology institute, whose employees also analyze the Chernobyl catastrophe and its consequences completely independently. This institute is to pursue four main points: First, a situation analysis of all precarious manufacturing plants, above all nuclear power plants; second, an assessment of global technology effects; third, the development of multinational programs for disaster control; and, fourth, the publication of an international magazine to inform the world.

[DER SPIEGEL] Where is such an institute to be located, and who is to pay for it?

[Chernosenko] Germany, for example, whose nuclear power plants also would have to be evaluated. I do not want to say at all that the German reactors will blow up earlier than the Soviet ones. In my opinion, they will explode a little bit later.

[DER SPIEGEL] The difficulties in coping with the consequences of 50 years of nuclear power are also big enough in Germany. The interment of the small reprocessing plant in Karlsruhe alone, whose construction once cost DM200 million, will at least swallow up 10 times as much. Do you see any opportunity at all to cope in the long run with the radioactivity that has accumulated in the world until today?

[Chernosenko] No. Now I would like to ask you something: Do I look like an aggressive man?

[DER SPIEGEL] No.

[Chernosenko] I want to say by that that I am tackling this question completely coolly as a nuclear physicist. Several alternatives are under discussion. The nuclear lobby unreservedly takes the view that more and more nuclear reactors are needed. In contrast to this, the idealists from the Greens think that the things should all be smashed. However, as we say in the East: If an idea that is voiced is great, the idea that is diametrically opposed to it is also great. The truth is somewhere in the middle.

[DER SPIEGEL] The advocates of nuclear energy are far from realizing this; they claim that nuclear energy is the cheapest form of energy, the most harmless, the safest from the ecological point of view, and that it is absolutely necessary as a protection against the feared climatic catastrophe.

[Chernosenko] As a physicist I can tell you: This is a big lie from the beginning to the end! If you add up exactly the expenses for the disposal of nuclear waste, for all that would have to be done to only make an approach to guaranteeing the safety of nuclear energy, you will see that even the means of a country that is as far developed as the FRG do not suffice for it. The main cost center of such precautions would be the means to control possible radiation risks...

[DER SPIEGEL] ... in other words: The price for absolute safety cannot be paid?

[Chernosenko] Exactly, it cannot be paid, and it cannot be achieved. This explosion in Chernobyl upset our ecological understanding for thousands of years. The real damage that can be seen at present is in no proportion to the things that are still to come. The need to watch a final deposit for thousands of years will ruin us.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you believe that an international institute might convey such an insight to mankind, who craves energy—before it is too late?

[Chernosenko] Mankind urgently needs such an institution. Up to this day, no country in the world revealed the true information on mankind's very critical situation.

Think, for example, of Germany, where currently 21 nuclear power plants are in operation; they are gigantic mines with time fuses. It suffices if only one or two reactors explode on German territory—then nobody needs to show up there in the next 100,000 years.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. Chernosenko, thank you for this interview.

Belarus

Finance Minister: No Plans for Feb Currency

LD2901172992 Moscow TASS in English 1612 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By BELTA correspondent Vladimir Glod]

[Text] January 29 TASS—Belarus will not introduce its own currency on February 1, the local "SOVETSKAYA BYELORUSSIA" newspaper said on Wednesday [29 January], quoting republican Finance Minister Vyacheslav Smilgin.

The minister also denied rumours that bank accounts of the population will be frozen. "No such decisions were adopted or planned," he was quoted as saying.

Belarus intends to introduce its own currency not earlier than in April, which will be the same ruble but with the "Belarus" stamp. Multimillion sums of the "old" ruble will be eliminated in the republic to avoid flooding the neighbouring states with cash money.

Deputy Confirms 'Special Banknotes'

OW2801121892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1056 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The Deputy Minister of Finance of Belarus Georgiy Tarasevich confirmed at a Minsk press conference on Monday [27 January] that his republic intends to introduce special banknotes—the word "Belarus" will be added to regular rubles. According to the minister, the new money will appear in four months or later.

On the future of "the giant amount" of ordinary rubles losing their purchasing power as a result of the move, the official expected it to be burned under the supervision of a special commission of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Swearing-In of Air Assault Units Postponed

LD2601184792 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belorussian 0400 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] The Presidium of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet has decided to postpone the swearing of the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth of Independent States by all air assault units located on the republic's territory. It was decided to return to the issue of when and to whom the air assault units in Belarus will swear their allegiance once it is clarified which of units will belong to the republic and which will serve the Commonwealth.

Trade Unions Call For Economic Stabilization

LD2601204892 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] The Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus has appealed to the government for extra measures to be adopted to stabilize the economy. In particular, they suggest that it try to have a privatization law adopted quickly, that effective control over price increases be established, and that the population's demands for plots of land be satisfied. If these demands are ignored, the Federation of Trade Unions has called upon labor collectives to be ready for protest actions.

Enterprise Directors Appeal to Supreme Soviet

LD3001100492 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2230 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] The Mogilev council of enterprise directors has, on behalf of its collectives, sent an appeal to the Belarussian Supreme Soviet and Government. The desperate situation in which the enterprises find themselves has forced them to send this document. The authors point out that contract relations have lost their legal basis. The monopolists among the suppliers are setting prices six times in excess of reasonable limits. A packet of laws on taxation is, in the opinion of the authors of the appeal, aimed at degrading production and impoverishing the population.

The industrialists demand that a ceiling be set on prices before it is too late that does not exceed last year's prices by more than four to five times, and that taxation rates be reviewed. If these demands are not met, the collectives reserve the right to demand the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet and the government.

1,000 Citizens Detained With Forged Passports

LD3001101992 Moscow TASS in English 0938 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Brest January 30 BELTA-TASS—More than 1,000 Soviet citizens were detained last year by the border guards at checkpoint Brest during attempts to leave abroad on forged foreign travel passports and invitations. This was unprecedented.

According to data the checkpoint personnel have available, the forging of foreign travel documents costs from 200 to several thousand rubles depending on a country of destination. People thoughtlessly trust swindlers who wait for clients, as a rule, near visa registration offices in front of militia who do not react to the already familiar faces.

The not easy conditions of the work of the border guards and customs personnel are being complicated by the mounting passenger flow.

The management of the railway terminal regularly sends telegrams to the Ministry of Railways in a demand to somehow check the passenger flow. But there has been no reaction from the ministry. As a result, border guards and customs personnel together with railwaymen have excess workload round-the-clock.

Moldova

People's Front Program Seeks Reunification

LD2901143692 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 29 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The Moldovan People's Front calls for reunification with Romania. The front's draft program and rules, published on 28 January, say that its supreme aim is participation in the liberation of what it calls occupied Romanian territories and the rebirth of Romania as a unitary national state. The front says victory in the Moldovan elections is one of its priority tasks.

Moldova 'No Longer Recognized'

OW3001001992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [29 January], the Moldovan Popular Front (MPF) submitted to its primary organizations new drafts of its program and rules stating the Front's determination to work for Moldova's reunification with Romania. Observers have noted that the two documents, which are expected to be adopted at the MPF's third conress in Kishinev on February 15-16, no longer recognize Moldova's statehood and make no reference to its law. The MPF does not undertake to comply with the republican constitution, although it pledges to respect international law and the right of peoples to self-determination.

Snegur, Romania's Iliescu Interviewed

LD3001095692

[Editorial Report] Kishinev Radio Kishinev Network in Russian at 0700 GMT on 26 January broadcasts a five-minute recording of an interview with Moldovan President Mircea Snegur and Romanian President Ion Iliescu after their meeting in Ungeny on 25 January, by correspondent Ion Nagy.

After noting that this meeting was the latest in a series, Snegur says, in response to a question from the correspondent about the main result of the meeting: "The main result was discussion—I mean productive discussion—of questions connected with the consequences of the transition to a market economy. Let's be frank—these consequences are not easy to bear, either for the Republic of Moldova or for Romania, as it happens. We reached the conclusion that we could overcome these consequences more quickly and successfully by carrying out certain joint measures, primarily (?arrange) to strengthen measures for the integration of individual branches of the economy, create joint enterprises, create joint economic zones, create free trade zones, and regulate [word indistinct] procedure at crossing points. In other words, strengthening customs control and so on—measures to ensure that the Republic of Moldova and Romania can (?see) how the things on which we are trying to reach agreement are being implemented and (?ensure that the results are good). Unfortunately, there have been times when not all elements here have been under control. Those are the things about which we talked today in detail. At a later date the heads of departments must hold talks and reach specific agreements on each issue, on each point, and reach the appropriate agreements."

Asked by the correspondent if he has anything to add, Iliescu says: "I would just like to add a few words. Both our states are encountering many problems. On the one hand, these problems are connected with the changes that have occurred in political life, particularly in the Soviet Union, and with the emergence of the new sovereign, independent states. This is raising new issues, new problems in international relations in the area, and specifically between Romania and neighboring states. Then there are the economic problems connected with the market economy which is being implemented in both our states. On the one hand we are interested in general experience in this area, and at the same time in developing mutual action and cooperation between our states in all areas. We discussed these measures specifically, as well as directions for our activities in the future." In conclusion, the correspondent thanks Snegur and Iliescu.

Parliament Passes Antimonopoly Law

OW3001002292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [29 January], the parliament in Moldova passed an anti-monopoly law outlining ways to promote competition in the republic and prevent, restrict and gradually eliminate monopolistic practices.

Under the new law, the Moldovan government may order the forced division of monopoly-holding structures. It will control the prices of products manufactured or sold by monopoly-holders. Surplus profits resulting from monopolistic activities shall be subject to additional taxation.

Parliament Passes Law on Chernobyl Crew

OW2901024692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Moldova's parliament passed Tuesday [28 January] a law on the social protection of the Moldovan citizens who had participated in the Chernobyl disaster control effort and earmarked 300 mn. [million] rubles to be paid to them from the state and enterprise budgets during eight years.

Chairman of the Moldovan chapter of the Chernobyl society Ion Rusu told parliament that around 300 Moldovans had participated in the Chernobyl disaster containment and control effort. 50 of them are disabled, and 24 have died.

Charges Introduced To Combat Pollution

LD2801224692 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0600 GMT 26 Jan 92

[Text] Charges for polluting the air and water resources, and for disposing of various kinds of waste are being introduced in Moldova. In accordance with a document by the republic's state department for protection of the enviroment and natural resources, charges will be levied on all enterprises, associations and organizations, including cooperatives and joint enterprises, regardless of whom they belong to or the form of ownership. This also applies to owners of personal vehicles.

[Moscow TASS International Service in Russian at 0110 GMT on 26 January adds the following: "Sixty-three percent of the revenues obtained this way will go to the local environmental protection funds which have been set up at town and rayon executive committees."]

Experts Finalize List of Army Units To Stay

OW2901020992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1633 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Experts of the chief command of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] armed forces are finalizing the list of military units to be left in Moldova to form the basis of its army, said Nikolae Kirtoake, councillor of the Moldova president for military issues and a member of the republican supreme security council. Moldova's army will be purely defensive, said he.

Economy, Production Decline to Past Levels

LD3001111692 Moscow TASS in English 0945 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Kishinev January 30 ITAR-TASS—The crisis in the national economy of Moldova has rolled the republic several years back. According to the republican state department for statistics, Moldova's national income produced last year corresponded to the indicators of 1985. The level of industrial production declined to the 1988 index.

Production in agriculture, which is the backbone of the Moldovan economy, is at the level of the 1970's.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Ready To Sign START Treaty

PM2901133792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 3

[Correspondent Colonel A. Ladin report: "Talks Went Successfully"]

[Text] Bilateral talks between delegations from Kazakhstan and France were held in Alma-Ata 25 January, with Kazakhstan Republic President Nursultan Nazarbayev and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas taking part.

At a news conference on the results of the talks, N. Nazarbayev and R. Dumas expressed their mutual satisfaction with the results of the meeting, at which they discussed issues relating to the activity of the Commonwealth of Independent States. As the Kazakh president said, he had briefed his top-level guest extensively on the republic's position on military questions.

Roland Dumas stressed that now, following the successful talks, France would take all necessary steps to open a diplomatic mission in Alma-Ata with all haste, and an appropriate document about this has been signed.

Answering questions about the future of the nuclear weapons located on Kazakh territory, President Nazarbayev said that they are being taken away to Russia because this is the only place that has a plant capable of destroying these weapons. As far as strategic missiles are concerned, we are prepared to sign the relevant international START Treaty, which we will ratify in our parliament, N. Nazarbayev stated. At the moment it is hard to say how long this will take, he added.

Diplomatic Ties Established With Iran, DPRK

LD2901175692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1638 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By KAZTAG correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 29 Jan (TASS)—Tolevtay Suleymenov, Kazakh foreign minister, and Mahmud Va'ezi, Iranian deputy foreign minister, signed a protocol today on the establishment of diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level.

On the same day, the head of the Kazakh Foreign Ministry and Yi In-kyu, DPRK deputy foreign minister, signed a joint communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states, also at ambassadorial level.

Kazakhstan now has diplomatic relations with nine foreign states. New specific steps in this direction are expected in the near future.

Invitation To Visit Extended

LD3001100692 Tehran IRNA in English 0701 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan. 30, IRNA—Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmud Va'ezi in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, Wednesday [29 January] extended an invitation to Kazakh Prime Minister Tereshchenko to visit Tehran. The invitation was accepted by the Kazakh official who agreed to visit Tehran at a mutually convenient future occasion.

The visiting Iranian envoy also discussed Iran-Kazakhstan relations and especially their projected cooperation in the area of energy and fuel industries, land, sea and air transportation, and mutual trade and banking. The Iranian enovy reaffirmed Iran's readiness to broaden friendly relations with the republic in light of the cultural identities between the people of Iran and Kazakhstan. The Foreign Ministry envoy also introduced 'Ali Reza Bigdeli as the Iranian envoy in charge of the newly opened Iranian embassy in Alma-Ata.

Kyrgyzstan

Government Prepares To Print National Currency

OW2901190792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1819 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kyrgyzstan has begun to form its national bank expected to prepare the introduction of a republican currency, IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent was told in the apparatus of President Askar Akayev. [sentence as received]

The national bank, which will be subordinated directly to parliament, will print new money, control the volume of circulating cash, and define the national currency's exchange rate with regard to other currencies.

Akayev, U.S. Official Reach Embassy Agreement

OW2201194692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1801 GMT 22 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kyrgyzstan's President Askar Akayev and special envoy of the U.S. State Department Nicholas Saugo reached agreement in Bishkek to open an American embassy in the republican capital already in February. The American side expressed readiness to receive a Kyrgyz working group in Washington to discuss the possibility of opening a Kyrgyz diplomatic mission in U.S. Commenting on results of Akayev's meeting with the American representative, chief of the Kyrgyz presidential staff Ednan Karabayev told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent that the stable social and political situation in Kyrgyzstan and the ongoing democratic processes in the republic supported by Washington encourage a positive resolution of the ambassadors' exchange problem.

Akayev Expresses 'Regret' on Liberalization

OW2401143792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1352 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan told the State Council on Friday [24 January] that the republican government had failed to properly prepare for the freeing of prices. He expressed regret that Kyrgyzstan had "yielded to Russia's pressure" and failed to develop a pricing policy of its own.

Mr. Akayev called for tight control over regulable prices, since the production of basic food products as still in the hands of monopoly-holders and there were zero conditions for competition.

Kachimbek Shakirov, head of the Prices Committee, observed that the setting of new prices in Kyrgyzstan "proceeds with difficulty, and in many cases prices have been established inordinately high." He attributed retail price increases to the growing costs of raw materials, metal and energy imported by the republic. As a result, state-run shops in Kyrgyzstan sell goods at prices that are higher than elsewhere in the Commonwealth.

To improve the situation, President Akayev suggested restricting food exports and barter operations, and toughen the licensing rules.

Tajikistan

Government Denies Weapon Supplies to Kabul

OW2901192592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1819 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Maj.-Gen. Faruukh Niyazov, head of Tajikistan's Defense Committee, has said that his republic is not supplying weapons or military hardware to the Kabul government, and never did so in the past.

The statement follows the appearance in the Iranian newspaper DJUMHURIE ISLAMI on January 27 of an interviev with a mujahidin leader who accused Tajikistan and other Central Asian republics of supplying weapons to Afghanistan.

Border Helicopter Fired On From Afghanistan

OW2901191292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1819 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] A Mi-24 helicopter on a check flight over the Tajik-Afghan border came under fire from the Afghan village of Yavviz on Tuesday [28 January] afternoon. It received 8 holes, but the crew under Major V. Miketyuk managed to land the machine successfully. The helicopter was shelled at a moment when another helicopter was helping a border guard unit detain trespassers.

Col. Valeriy Kochenov, chief of staff of the Operational Group of the Central Asian Border District, told IF [INTERFAX] that four Afghans had been detained during the digging of gold on the Tajik side of the Pyandj River. He said the borderguards had not returned the fire.

Democratic Party Demands Government Resign

LD2901235192 Moscow TASS in English 2211 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TAJIKTA correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe January 29 TASS—Leaders of the Tajik Democratic Party have blamed the Tajik leadership for deteriorating living standards and demanded the parliament and Cabinet of Ministers to resign, Party Chairman Shodmon Yusupov told NARODNAYA GAZETA.

According to opposition leaders, the Tajik Government "does not have a programme of transition to market and does not know what to do with the market". Hence, the opposition does not to form a coalition with the Government and holds it responsible for possible consequences. [sentence as received] He did not specify what kind of consequences those might be, but said he did not rule out the possibility that desperate people could resort to extreme measures.

The deadline for the ultimatum of resignation is February 12.

Uzbekistan

Student Leader Forecasts Possible Strikes

LD2901141392 Moscow TASS in English 1237 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By special correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Tashkent January 29 TASS—"Now the student community has understood that by staging mass protests it can achieve a lot", the first secretary of the Union of the Youth of Uzbekistan Jawaharlal Hakimov told TASS. The secretary of the Youth Union of the Tashkent University Andrey Karimov also did not rule out the possibility of repetition of the incidents.

The student demonstrations of 16-17 January on the Tashkent University campus claimed two lives, over one hundred were wounded. The cause of the unrest was a sharp rise in the prices of food products after their liberalization. The decisions taken to compensate the price rise got "bogged down" in the bureaucratic quagmire and were not implemented on time. After the militia firing on the students, the economic demands were replaced by political ones, such as demands for resignation of the republic's president, the government and the Supreme Soviet.

"This dirty action was planned in advance", declared President Islam Karimov. A Supreme Soviet appeal to the people mentioned that some forces "very much want to drive a wedge among the people".

The second secretary of the central soviet of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (PDPU) Aziz Nasirov called it a "continuation of a political struggle of dark forces".

"Among the students no political force is considered as an authority. The Erk and the Birlik political parties could not have provoked this, because the students do not trust them in the same way, as they do the ruling PDPU. In their meeting the students denounced opposition leaders in the same way, as they did the representatives of the authorities", Jawaharlal Hakimov said. According to him, the demonstration was spontaneous, but the "tragedy will certainly be used to political ends".

Minister Denies OMON Used in Student Unrest

OW2901215692 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1819 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Uzbekistan's Interior Minister Zakir Almatov has said that no OMON [special purpose militia detachment] (special task police) units were used in Tashkent to suppress the student unrest that flared up on January 16. In his interview for a local newspaper he described the policemen sent to pacify the student protesters as "puny boys from ordinary police units."

Mr. Almatov reiterated that the police had not been ordered to open fire. He said the use of rubber clubs and firearms had been spontaneous and resulted from "nervous superstrain" and the need to "defend their lives and rule out pogroms."

According to the general, the first shots were fired by the students. He said he had been informed by students themselves that 3 or 4 days prior to the massacre unidentified persons had gone through the student hostels to urge young people to take to the streets.

Karimov Orders Tashkent OMON Disbanded

PM3001102592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Shakhabutdin Zaynutdinov report: "Tashkent OMON [special purpose militia detachment] Deceased"]

[Text] The Tashkent OMON [special purpose militia detachment], which compromised itself during the recent student riots, has been disbanded.

President Islam Karimov has issued an ordinance repealing the orders of the Union and republic Ministries of Internal Affairs of September 1990 on the creation of the OMON in the Uzbek capital. At the same time, it has been decided to form a separate militia battalion under the Tashkent City Soviet Executive Committee Internal Affairs Administration. It is to be entrusted with maintaining public order at the time of natural disasters, major industrial accidents, catastrophes, and in the event of emergency circumstances and the arrest of armed criminals.

Armenia

Nagorno-Karabakh Leader Urges Recognition

NC2901192092 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] During his stay in Yerevan, Oleg Yesayan, the head of the government of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR], met with the republic's journalists. The local press has published interviews he gave.

In an interview with HAYASTANI HANRAPETUTYUN reporter Bakur Karapetyan, Yesayan discussed the situation in NKR, his contacts with Armenian leaders, and possible relations with Azerbaijan.

"Now we have state structures; that is, there is an entity for conducting negotiations," he said, adding: "The recognition of our republic should rest at the foundation of these negotiations. If the Azerbaijani leadership finds the courage to recognize our republic, we will be ready to cooperate. We are proposing the principle of integrity; that is, Karabakh is a single political and economic entity with which relations must be established. It is also to the benefit of Azerbaijan to have permanent ties with NKR. Threatening with guns and speaking from a position of power would, I am sure, bring nothing. There is no doubt about that. We will convince them of this."

Supreme Council Chairman Cited

OW3001003192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1655 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Azerbaijan will have to accept the fact that Armenians will continue to live in Nagorno-Karabakh, whether the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic is officially recognized or not, said Artur Mkrtchyan, Chairman of the Nagorno-Karabakh Supreme Council at his meeting with deputies of the Armenian parliament in Yerevan.

The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic was proclaimed last autumn. It included the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region and part of the neighboring Geranboi (formerly Shaumyanovsk) district of Azerbaijan populated predominantly by Armenians. Azerbaijan has not only refused to recognize the new republic, but also deprived Karabakh of the status of an autonomy, renaming this region "the Nagorno (highland) part of Karabakh."

Mkrtchyan pointed out that Azerbaijan had worked to resettle Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh, while the latter had been defending their right to live in their homeland. He said that militia forces were being formed throughout Karabakh to resist attacks by Azerbaijani armed units.

Official Responds to Charges on Helicopter Crash

Caught Fire Before Crash

NC2901214392 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] An Mi-8 helicopter flying between Agdam-Shusha crashed near Shushikend at 1120 on 28 January. According to the information provided by the Internal Affairs Department of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR], witnesses say that the tail of the helicopter caught fire, following which huge crates were thrown out of the helicopter. These crates are usually used in transporting ammunition. Despite efforts, the helicopter crashed and [word indistinct].

The commander of the self-defense force in Karin-Tak and the representative of the chief of staff of the self-defense forces of NKR, commenting on the claim made by Azerbaijan's permanent mission in Moscow that the helicopter was hit by a heat-seeking missile, categorically rejected the presence of any heat-seeking missiles on NKR territory.

The Azerbaijani Army has been carrying out large-scale operations in NKR's Shushinskiy rayon for the last few days now. Many people died in battles waged near the last Armenian village Karin-Tak in that region. Eighteen village self-defense fighters died during battles on 26 January alone. There is no end to the shelling of Stepanakert and nearby Armenian villages by Alazan missiles and artillery from Shusha, a city which has been transformed into an Azerbaijani armed forces center. A few thousand soldiers and a large amount of military hardware has been concentrated there.

Shusha is maintaining its link with other Azerbaijani settlements only by helicopter. In the last few days, nearly [words indistinct] helicopters landed in Shusha, (?bringing in) arms, some of which (?are brought) from Azerbaijan. The quality of these arms are obvious. It was no coincidence that while investigating the possible causes of the military helicopter crash near Karakend last November, the possibility that a home-made [words indistinct] was on board and which caught fire causing the destruction of the helicopter was also considered.

President Remarks

PM2901212792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Telephone interview with Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan by Aleksandra Lugovskaya; date not given: "Call To Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan"]

[Text] [Lugovskaya] Levin Akopovich, can you clarify the situation involving the helicopter?

[Ter-Petrosyan] First of all I want to express immense regret in connection with what happened and to express condolences to the families of the dead. I only learned about the incident yesterday and I do not know the details as yet. I was told that the helicopter was hit over Stepanakert, flew another 12 km to Shusha, and crashed on the edge of a cliff. An objective investigation is needed. Remember how many accusations there were in the previous incident, but they were not corroborated in the course of the investigation. This suggests that it needs to be done objectively this time, with neutral experts from other states—Russia, Kazakhstan, or others—involved.

Parliament To Suspend Treaty Ratification

LD3001092592 Moscow TASS in English 0850 GMT 30 Jan 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan January 30 TASS—"The Armenian Supreme Soviet's commission for foreign relations will shortly discuss Russia's decision not to ratify the treaty on friendship, cooperation, and mutual security with Armenia, and will move to suspend the process of its ratification by the Armenian parliament," chairman of the commission David Vardanyan told the parliamentarian newspaper "ARMENIAN REPUBLIC". He noted that "this would be correct both from the political and legal points of view."

Vardanyan expressed his view why Russia has refused to ratify the treaty. He believes this is due to one of its article, liable to give rise to various misunderstandings. It says that the high contracting parties pledge to refrain from any actions directed against each other, not to allow their territories to be used for agressive purposes or other forcible actions against the other party. "This article is responsible for the Russian parliament's refusal to ratify the treaty," Vardanyan said. "It obliges the Russian Federation to interfere in any conflict, linked with Armenia, and may get it involved in a situation similar with that in Afghanistan," he said.

"Moreover, we would not want our neighbours to get an impression that Armenia has concluded a special treaty with Russia," Vardanyan added.

President Issues Decree on 'Valuable Metals'

NC2901055192 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 27 Jan 92

["Decree issued by the Armenian President on the Disposal of the Valuable Metals Found at Armenian Enterprises, Establishments, and Organizations"—radio headline]

[Text] In order to make productive use of the valuable metals found in machinery, equipment, scraps, and waste located in Armenian enterprises, establishments, and organizations, it is hereby decided:

1. To create commissions in Armenian enterprises, establishments, and organizations regardless of the form of their subjection and ownership. Within a week these commissions should draw up an inventory of machinery, equipment, scraps, and waste which include valuable metals.

2. To prohibit the sale and export of the material valuables mentioned in point 1 of this decree, pending the adoption of a special decision by the Armenian Government.

3. To instruct the Armenian Government to ascertain within two weeks the amount of machinery, equipment, scraps, and waste in the inventory of the enterprises, establishments, and organizations which include valuable metals, and to set the regulations for the extraction, reprocessing, and future disposal of such metals obtained thereby.

4. The decree goes into effect immediately.

[Signed] Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan.

Foreign Minister in Spain on Official Visit

LD2701052192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0132 GMT 27 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Shekhovtsev]

[Text] Madrid, 27 Jan (TASS)—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan has arrived in Madrid. He will meet and hold talks today with Spanish Foreign Affairs Minister Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez. They are expected to sign a joint statement on establishing diplomatic relations between Armenia and Spain. The Spanish Council of Ministers adopted the decision to establish diplomatic relations with countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States on 10 January.

Holds News Conference

LD2901050792 Moscow TASS in English 1848 GMT 28 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Shekhovtsov]

[Text] Madrid January 28 TASS—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan today completed his official Spanish visit by signing a protocol on the establishment of Spanish-Armenian diplomatic relations with his Spanish counterpart Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez.

At a news conference, the ministers expressed the assurance the development of comprehensive relations between Armenia and Spain corresponds to the interests of peoples in both states and consolidation of inter-state cooperation on the European scale.

Ovanesyan stressed Armenia will soon become a fully-fledged member of both European structures and the United Nations organization. Touching on Nagorno-Karabakh, he said "it will belong neither to Armenia nor to Azerbaijan, but will be an independent state within the Commonwealth."

In the words of the Armenian foreign minister, "it is the best possible compromise, which will enable the termination of bloodshed". He believes the international community "should recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state," and the Commonwealth "should send its observers there".

Democratic Armenia now wants to have normal relations with all its neighbours and contribute to the stability, peace, prosperity, progress and solution of all regional problems by peaceful means.

In Spain Ovanesyan met high-ranking government representatives and business people. Today the Armenian minister left Madrid for Brussels, where he is expected to sing an agreement on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Belgium.

Border With Iran Made More Accessible

LD2901235692 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] The state border with Iran has become more accessible for residents of border villages of Megrinskiy Rayon, Armenia. Additional gates have been made in the wire entanglement. Aleksandr Babenko, commander of the southwest border district of the republic, told RIA that the procedure has been made easier in order to create favorable conditions for peasants to carry out agricultural operations on plots of land situated immediately near the border. Similar measures have been introduce in another three Armenian rayons.

Azerbaijan

Armed Clashes Continue in Nagorno-Karabakh

Shusha Bombarded

LD2701185992 Moscow TASS in English 1810 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Report by AZERINFORM correspondent Sabir Mirzoyev]

[Text] Baku January 27 TASS—An air alarm was sounded in the city of Shusha four times on Monday [27 January], with residents having to hurriedly take refuge in house basements converted into bomb shelters.

About ten apartment houses have been destroyed and there are injured as a result of artillery bombardment from the direction of the Armenian villages of Dashalty, Mkhitarikend, Shushikend and the city of Khankendy, according to the Interior Ministry of the Azerbaijani Republic.

The city, which has been blockaded by militants throughout January, has been lacking drinking water for a week now and electricity is supplied intermittently, Wagif Guseyinov, deputy head of the executive power in Shusha, told AZERINFORM.

Stepanakert Shelled

LD2901180392 Moscow TASS in English 1701 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Stepanakert/Khankendy January 29 TASS—Azeri and Armenian warring sides in Nagorno-Karabakh continued on Wednesday [29 January] to shell the strongholds of each other in the ethnic-strife torn region. Azeri forces shelled Stepanakert from the city of Shusha early in the day, killing two people and damaging several buildings, according to the Nagorno-Karabakh Interior Ministry. Armenian self-defence units fired in response.

Stepanakert remains cut off from electric power, water and heat supplies. Telegraph and telephone communication lines are not functioning either. TASS is using satellite communication links to transmit from Stepanakert.

During the funeral of the victims of an attack on the Karin-Tak settlement on Tuesday [28 January], a helicopter flying over a combat zone towards Shusha caught fire, fell down and exploded. The helicopter was later reported to belong to the Azeri "Azal" air company.

Two reporters of the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper, who were taken hostage on January 28, arrived to Stepanakert on Wednesday. Darya Aslamova and Oleg Starukhin together with two Armenians were taken hostage on January 28 by five armed Azeris. They were freed from captivity, where they were beaten up, by Armenian self-defence units. Three Azeris were killed in the clash, two others fled. The reporters said they are feeling well.

Shusha Shelling Continues

LD2901120592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1045 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By AZERINFORM correspondent Sabir Mirozoyev]

[Text] Baku, 29 Jan (TASS)—Shusha has been under fire from hail dispersal [gradoboynyye] weapons mounted in Armenia's Shushikend and Mkhitarikend villages since early this morning. Mansur Mamedov, head of Shushinskiy rayon's executive authority, says initial reports indicate that four buildings have been fully or partially destroyed in the town. The residents managed to take cover in bomb shelters in good time and were not hurt. Shelling continues at noon.

Residents of Geybala village, Shushinskiy rayon, Azerbaijan, were forced to leave their homes quickly to save their lives yesterday. The Azerbaijani Internal Affairs Ministry reports that the village was destroyed in the artillery and rocket fire a few hours after the population's evacuation.

Shusha 'Encircled in Blockade'

PM3001093592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 6

[Report by correspondent Zaur Kadymbekov under the "Trouble Spots" rubric: "Shusha Encircled by Blockade"]

[Text] Baku—The city of Shusha, the center of the Azerbaijan community in the mountain region of Karabakh, is encircled in a blockade of armed formations of Armenian guerrillas. Surrounding Azerbaijani villages have been ransacked and many have been destroyed by artillery fire, razed to the ground, and in fact wiped off the face of the earth. According to information from the republic Interior Ministry press center, Shusha is the final refuge for thousands of people who have fled from their homes.

This ancient Azerbaijani stronghold has been virtually cut off from the outside world by the guerrillas encircling it: power lines have been cut, the water supply pipe has been destroyed, and all roads leading into the city have been cut off. There is no heating in the city even in kindergartens, schools, and the hospital, and the food supply is running out. Helicopters ferrying basic food supplies to the besieged people are continually coming under fire and because of the constant threat of being shot down cannot always fly the sick and wounded out to Azerbaijan. Frosts, heavy snow, and fog in the mountains are hampering still further the attempts to establish air communication and are aggravating the Shusha people's plight.

By day and night hail guns and Alazan missile launchers have been firing on Shusha from the Armenian villages of Dashalty and Shushiken and the city of Khankendy. Ruined homes, cold, hunger, and death—that is the fate awaiting one of Azerbaijan's most beautiful cities today.

Russian and Central Television have been giving an extremely one-sided coverage of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and have not once mentioned besieged Shusha, which is managing to maintain a desperate defense only with great effort. The blockaded city is having to resist the superior forces of the guerrillas, who are receiving regular reinforcement. Each day 10-15 helicopters fly in from Armenia bringing them arms, food, and new detachments of bandit formations, expanding the scale of the conflict. They are now attacking some villages outside the former autonomous oblast in the adjoining Agdamskiy, Fizulinskiy, Dzhebrailskiy, and Geraynboyskiy rayons. And as always civilians are the first to suffer and die.

Continuing bloodshed, the destruction of villages and cities, and the new stream of refugees are a further reminder to everyone, politicians, leaders of the republics, and intermediaries, that it is necessary to immediately resume the search for ways to achieve a cease-fire, the withdrawal of all armed formations from the conflict zone, and the establishment of peace. Every wasted day, every hour makes the possibility of achieving accord more remote and difficult.

Comments on Helicopter Downing

LD2901201692 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Report by presenter Tatyana Mitkova; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Blood is again being shed in Nagorno-Karabakh. Observers notice that the fiercest clashes since the conflict began are taking place now, whereas the conflict itself seems without solution. The United Nations Organization refrains from becoming involved, despite Karabakh's demand. Attempts by the former USSR and Russia have also proved fruitless. It cannot be ruled out that Middle East Muslim states would like to play a peacemaking role and this will strengthen their influence on the Commonwealth of Independent States' Muslim republics. The recent intensive contacts between Azerbaijan and Iran give grounds for such forecasts.

We reported yesterday about 40 civilians aboard a helicopter perishing in Karabakh. Now we offer you two versions of the incident. The first is an Azerbaijani one, which we have just received by telephone from the ASSA-IRADA agency. The Mi-8 helicopter, which took off from Zabrat station with civilians on board, was shot down by a missile fired by Armenian guerrillas over Nagorno-Karabakh. Witnesses say that the helicopter was shot down at an altitude of about 700 meters. They also maintain that the rescue vehicles which were going to the area of the catastrophe were fired on by Armenian guerrillas. In connection with the emerging situation President Mutalibov has postponed his visit to Switzerland. This was a version, I repeat, by the ASSA-IRADA Azeri agency.

Now follows an Armenian version as given by the INTERFAX agency. The Azeri helicopter came down near Shusha because, perhaps, it was carrying weapons, including self-made ones, the Nagorno-Karabakh Directorate of Internal Affairs said. It rejects the version of the Azerbaijan People's Front, alleging that it was a civilian helicopter which was shot down by Armenian guerrillas using a heat- seeking missile. The Nagorno-Karabakh Directorate of Internal Affairs also reports that for more than three days the Azerbaijan Army has been continuously storming the last Armenian village of Karentag situated in Sushinskiy Rayon. According to the Armenian side, more than 20 defenders of the village have died in battles over the last few days.

Situation in Dzhabrail

NC2901151292 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1800 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] Correspondent Eyvaz Yusufly has reported that a group of people's deputies; Procurator General Murad

Babayev; Abbas Feyzullayev, head of the Dzhabrail Rayon Executive Office; A. Orudzhev, Azerbaijan minister of justice; and Idris Aliyev, doctor of law and chairman of the Azerbaijan Lawyers' Union, visited towns in Dzhabrail on 26 January to look at the region's situation. Residents told the officials that the Azerbaijani towns are frequently attacked by people from Armenian towns in the rayon and that peaceful folk are in danger.

The officials looked at ways to establish security for the people.

Gas Supplies to Armenia Cut Off Once Again

LD2901215992 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Azerbaijan has again closed the gas pipeline to Armenia, the RIA Agency has been informed by the main controller of the Armgaz [Armenian Gas] association. Fuel now reaches Armenia through the Georgian branch line.

Vehicles at Standstill Due to Fuel Shortage

NC2801083692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 25 Jan 92

[Text] A large number of intercity buses and hundreds of taxicabs and agricultural vehicles are at a standstill in and around Baku. Namik Aliyev, director of the Azerbaijan petroleum authority, has said that the problem is a result of Russia and Kazakhstan's failure to supply crude oil to Azerbaijan's refineries. Aliyev also said that the shortage will be resolved to a great extent when the protocol signed between Azerbaijan and Russia for the sale of 3 million tonnes of crude oil to Azerbaijani refineries in 1992 comes into effect.

Ministries Pledge Action To Thwart Arms Thefts

PM2701110792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[RIA report: "Azerbaijan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of National Security Ready to Protect Servicemen Against Attacks"]

[Text] The Azerbaijan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of National Security will take the most resolute measures to prevent the seizure of arms and equipment from servicemen and track down and detain those who take part in such criminal acts. That is said in the ministries' joint statement issued 22 January.

The statement was issued after a series of attacks on servicemen in areas where military units are stationed with the aim of seizing weapons and combat hardware. Recently there was an armed attack on a military detail in the settlement of Sital-Chay, 80 km north of Baku. The exchange of fire left dead and wounded on both sides. Similar actions occurred earlier in Baku, Lenkoran, and Gyandzha.

There is no doubt, the statement says, that the attacks on servicemen are serving to complicate relations between the population and the Army. Provocative and unlawful acts of this kind are being used by certain forces to aggravate the sociopolitical situation and inflame the atmosphere in Azerbaijan.

Ferryboat Reportedly Carried Afghan Arms

NC2701203792 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1730 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Text] SNARK agency reports that recently an explosion took place on a ferryboat as it entered Baku Port. The explosion was due to the careless handling of a gun position on the boat. The ferryboat was illegally transporting arms from Afghanistan to Azerbaijan.

Georgia

Further Reportage on Gamsakhurdia Situation

Denies Being Deposed

LD2901131192 Moscow TASS in English 1238 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Moscow January 29 TASS—"It is not true that I have been deposed. Legally, I am still the president. I have been elected by the people. I have not renounced my presidency or submitted my resignation," Georgian President Zviad Gamsaskhurdia, who is staying in western Georgia told TASS today. He agreed to be interviewed on condition that his exact whereabouts were not revealed.

Gamsakhurdia admitted that he had to change his whereabouts, stressing that does not mean that he is no longer Georgia's president. "I will not leave Georgia. I intend to continue fighting," he said.

He denied accusations that his refusal to compromise and give in to opposition's demands led to human deaths in Tbilisi. He said he was trying to "resolve problems through negotiations, but the opposition was not interested in discussing concrete issues".

They aimed to seize power, which they did, using arms, he emphasised.

Gamsakhurdia denied that his popularity had sunk and that several supporters left him. "I have many supporters, in Tbilisi and other ciites. They are continuing fighting," he said, adding that their numbers were increasing.

Gamsakhurdia dismissed as disinformation allegations that he steered a course towards disrupting relations with independent states. "On the contrary, we tried in every way to strengthen relations with independent states, to maintain good relations with them," he said. "But at the most crucial moment I could not get out of the city, even from my own residence. I could not go physically to Alma-Ata, for example, (where the Commonwealth was founded on December 22)."

"I didn't reject the Commonwealth idea and wanted Georgia to clarify its position on the Commonwealth, the parliament to speak out on that issue," Gamsakhurdia emphasised. "But the opposition created a situation in which any steps were impossible".

Speaking about the short-term prospects for inter-ethnic relations in the Caucasus, Gamsakhurdia alleged that "strife" in this region "was fostered by enemies of the Caucasus". He made a call "to make everything possible to enable the peoples of the Caucasus to set up a sort of common home, where they could live in peace and understanding, rather than quarrel."

"For me it was the cornerstone of my policy," the Georgian president continued.

He is convinced that "sovereign states that were formed on the territory of the former USSR must find a common language, the language of friendship and mutual understanding."

"If things get normal in Georgia, if legitimate power and legality on the whole is restored here, then Georgia will embark on that road," Gamsakhurdia promised.

He announced that on January 27 he "personally wrote an address to the United Nations, the peoples and governments worldwide, to all people of goodwill" urging them to denounce "the junta and criminal gangs that are currently operating in Georgia on behalf of the so- called provisional government", as well as to help the Georgian people "to restore legality, legal power and normal life".

At the same time Gamsakhurdia urged all countries to boycott "the provisional government" of Georgia, set up by the "military council", i.e. junta, and to renounce any relations with it.

Rally Held in Sukhumi

LD2901173792 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1542 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] The situation in western Georgia is getting more complicated. As you know, on the night of 29 January troops of the Mkhedrioni and the guard entered the town of Zugdidi and shooting broke out. On the side of provisional government five people were killed and many were wounded; the number of casualties on the other side is being clarified.

On 29 January Tengiz Kitovani's guards were spotted on the outskirts to Gali by the Inguri River. This caused panic among the residents of the town. Therefore the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution to send its officials and Gali Rayon deputies to Gali to find out about the situation and prevent the entry of military formations. If need be the officials have the right to hold talks with the leaders of the military formations.

At the second part of today's session of the Abkhazia Supreme Soviet a commission should be formed to hold talks with the Sukhumi strike committee. This is necessary, as in Sukhumi the airport and railroad transport are not functioning.

Also today in Sukhumi there was a rally in support of Zviad Gamsakhurdia. About 2,000 people participated. At the rally it was announced that the group of supporters of the former president had returned from Moscow consisting of 80 persons but their trip had not yielded tangible results.

Another very curious piece of news which I have just been given by our correspondent. He reported that during a talk with an anti-aircraft defense officer, who wished to remain nameless, there emerged some facts regarding the flight of the former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia to Sukhumi and Groznyy. The officer said there was a real threat that the Tu-134 plane carrying Zviad Gamsakhurdia might be downed by Air Force fighters. Nine times the pilot of the said plane violated the navigational regulations. Fighters were scrambled in order to identify it. When the plane left Sukhumi the pilot would not answer to the question friend or foe. Upon the alarm being raised two Air Force fighters approached and were ready to liquidate the air space violator. Only at the last minute the pilot of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's plane, realizing the real threat, gave his identification and route.

Demonstration in Tbilisi

LD2901174692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1601 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Balebanov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 29 Jan(TASS)—Another demonstration was held today by supporters of former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. In the afternoon, about 5,000 people tried to get through to the government building where the Council of Ministers was in session. However, their path was blocked by a cordon of forces of law-enforcement bodies. The requests and exhortations to disperse were received with foul language and and insulting shouts. Following blank warning shots fired into the air, the demonstrators had to turn back and went down Rustaveli Prospect in the direction of the local television building.

Casualty Claims Denied

AU3001115092 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0500 GMT 30 Jan

[Text] Yesterday, approximately 3,000 people who had gathered at Station Square [words indistinct] "Traitors," proceeded toward the government building. On this occasion, the route was longer. The demonstrators proceeded along David Aghmashenebeli Avenue, crossed Vorontsov Bridge and Collective Farm Square and emerged onto Pushkin Street where they encountered National Guardsmen.

At a meeting in Rustaveli Square, the supporters of the former president were assuring passersby that they had been fired upon and that there were people dead and injured, and also that water cannons had been used against them. Fortunately, no victims were found.

As was explained to us in the Tbilisi commandant's office, [words indistinct] shots were fired into the air after one of the demonstrators had fired shots into the air from a pistol. As regards the use of water cannons, a warning jet was released that simply washed down a dirty bus parked nearby.

Zugdidi 'Back to Normal'

LD2901183192 Moscow TASS in English
1719 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi January 29 (TASS)—Troops of the Georgian provisional government are doing everything possible to return the situation in Zugdidi (western Georgia) back to normal, Giya Karkarashvili, the military commandant of Zugdidi, told TASS on Wednesday. 1,500 supporters of the Georgian provisional government demonstrated in the city today, he added. Karkarashvili said the situation is normal in the city, but a curfew was introduced to avoid incidents.

Supporters Seize Tu-134

PM3001101592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
29 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 8

[Report by Igor Andreyev: "Vnukovo-Sukhumi: Tug-of-War"]

[Text] A Tu-134 aircraft landed at Vnukovo Airport on Sunday 26 January. Before this it had made several flights with Georgian ex-President Z. Gamsakhurdia and his associates and supporters on board from Armenia to Abkhazia and from Sukhumi to Groznyy.

From Moscow the Sukhumi plane was to have taken home a small group—some 40 people—of the overthrown president's supporters who had organized demonstrations in his support in the capital. However, the flight did not take place: The former Georgian Civil Aviation Administration sent a telex demanding that the crew of the Tu-134 be dispatched to Tbilisi under the captaincy of Begiya. The administration chief, returning from a business trip to Germany, backed up the telegram with his own presence in Moscow.

"The decision of the Georgian—I emphasize, Georgian—authorities," Valeriy Baranov, acting chief of Vnukovo Civil Aviation Production Association, said, "elicited a response both in Moscow and in Sukhumi. Passengers at Vnukovo—Gamsakhurdia's supporters—forced their way onto the apron and seized the Tu-134. And the local aviation authorities in Sukhumi are not sending to Moscow a regular Tu-154 belonging to our association. The condition they are imposing is the return of the aircraft and of E. Begiya's crew, who, take note, are not in Moscow but in Tbilisi, and certainly through no will of ours. Thus, our aircraft, its crew, and the passengers of the Sukhumi-Moscow flight have ended up as hostages of opposing forces.

"It is not worth describing all the peripeteias of the conflict, into which many services of the Civil Aviation Department of the Russian Ministry of Transport and Georgian departments have now been drawn," Valeriy Valentinovich continued. "As of 1200 on 28 January the situation appears as follows: A small aircraft has flown from Sukhumi to Tbilisi, taken Begiya's crew on board, and is returning to Sukhumi. It is reported from Sukhumi that our Tu-154 is being prepared for a flight to Moscow. We hope that those who have seized the aircraft at Vnukovo, having been convinced that the pilot has been freed, will not prevent it from flying to Sukhumi."

Reported Near Ochamchira

LD3001140892

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 30 January, during the "Vesti" newcast, broadcasts a brief report on the situation in west Georgia read by announcer Tatyana Khodobina, who notes the fall of Zugdidi to provisional government forces, Zviad Gamsakhurdia's insistence that he is still president, and that "according to some reports, he is now in the area of the town of Ochamchira."

Former Soviet Troops To Withdraw by Fall 1992

LD2901203492 Moscow TASS in English
1746 GMT 29 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Voronyuk]

[Text] Tbilisi January 29 TASS— The interior troops of the former Soviet Union are planned to be withdrawn from Georgia by autumn of 1992, Deputy Commander of a troops division, Colonel Vladimir Ushanev, told TASS on Wednesday [29 January]. A corresponding agreement was reached on Tuesday [28 January] by Vasiliy Savvin, the interior troops commander in Tbilisi, and Tengiz Sigua, head of the Georgian Provisional Government, according to Ushanev.

The colonel denied rumours that the interior troops are deployed on the border of Georgia and Abkhazia, which makes part of Georgia and claims sovereignty. "This is misinformation. None of our soldiers is staying on the border", Ushanev said.

Sharashenidze on Plans To Join Security System

LD3001110992 Moscow TASS in English
0828 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 30 TASS—"Georgia does not plan to build up large armed forces. It deems it expedient to join the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] collective security system," Georgian Defence Minister Lieutenant General Levan Sharashenidze told "KRASNAYA ZVESDA". The interview was published in the newspaper on January 30.

The sixty-year-old minister stressed that "we do not intend to form a large army." According to Sharashenidze, Georgia's foreign policy should pursue the purpose of "living in friendship and concord with all the countries bordering on Georgia, primarily with Russia."

"It would be reasonable for Georgia to join the CIS system of collective security," Sharashenidze believes. The republic's economy is ruined and it "cannot afford to spend money on something that already exists, for instance, on the anti-aircraft defence system and naval forces," he noted.

Touching on the functions and tasks of the ministry he heads, Sharashenidze said that it was "a large military-political body". The ministry is busy working on a theoretical foundation and legislative principles for building up national armed forces which, Sharashenidze believes, should proceed by stages. "First, it is planned to form a separate regiment or brigade," he said.

Speaking about the troops deployed in Georgia, Sharashenidze said that President Gamsakhurdia's decree to nationalise the property of units and contingents, stationed on the territory of the republic, was politically wrong. He reaffirmed that Georgia would "ensure the protection of the honour and dignity of servicemen."

Sigua Alleges Illegal Currency Transfers

AU2901094592 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network
in Georgian 0500 GMT 29 Jan

[Text] As you know, Batoni Tengiz Sigua recently gave a news conference for Georgian and foreign journalists. You are already familiar with some excerpts from his meeting. We now propose to give you some additional information.

Batoni Tengiz Sigua touched upon (?the fate) of sums of hard currency that were illegally transferred to various foreign banks during Gamsakhurdia's administration. In particular, $2.5 million were illegally transferred to one Hungarian bank. This sum was then transferred to an Austrian bank. In addition, 1.3 million dollars were (?illegally) transferred to Switzerland by the Rustaveli Metallurgical Factory. We now have to [word indistinct] this huge sum.

Consultation Council Discusses Stabilization

LD2901144192 Moscow TASS in English
1248 GMT 29 January 92

[By TASS correspondents Igor Gvritishvili and Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi January 29 TASS—The situation in South Ossetia and ways to settle the military conflict there were in the focus of the plenary meeting of the interim Consultation Council, which ended in Tbilisi.

Participants, representing Georgian political parties and voluntary organisations, analyzed the results of the first contacts between the Georgian delegation and envoys from the South Ossetian community.

The participants emphasised that the contacts were of importance for beginning official negotiations with South Ossetia, aimed at ending bloodshed in this region.

The meeting also discussed other matters related to the stabilization of the political situation in Georgia.

South Ossetian Prime Minister Interviewed

PM2901145792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 2

[Interview with South Ossetian Prime Minister Znaur Gassiyev, by correspondent Captain Third Class Yu. Gladkevich, in Tskhinvali, date not given: "Who Needs a Beirut in Georgia?"]

[Text] Following the illegal arrest of T. Kulumbegov the burden of the political and practical leadership of South Ossetia was shouldered by his close comrade-in-arms Z. Gassiyev. After having devoted himself to party and soviet work for many years, during the perestroyka period Znaur Nikolayevich Gassiyev resolutely broke with those who were trying to maintain the omnipotence of the party apparatus and sided with the people and democratic transformations in the region.

The new Georgian leadership, which came to power as a result of the removal of former president Z. Gamsakhurdia, has released T. Kulumbegov. The South Ossetian Supreme Soviet has confirmed Torez Georgiyevich as Supreme Soviet chairman, while Z. Gassiyev has been appointed prime minister of the republic.

Our correspondent—Captain Third Class Yu. Gladkevich—met with Znaur Gassiyev in Tskhinvali and asked him a few questions.

[Gladkevich] Znaur Nikolayevich, as someone who has visited South Ossetia in peacetime many times, I was profoundly shaken to see Tskhinvali and the surrounding villages. Tell me, what state is the South Ossetian economy in today?

[Gassiyev] To put it very briefly—completely ruined. As a result of the conflict, the territory of the former autonomous oblast—and, accordingly, its national economy—has been divided into three parts. The first part is the former Leningorskiy Rayon—now Akhalgorskiy Rayon—outside our zone of influence. Although it has not been affected by military operations, many Ossetians have left these areas and a considerable criminal element has built up there, making it extremely difficult for enterprises to operate. The second part—around one-third of South Ossetian territory—is a zone of almost complete destruction where a war has been waged. It is depopulated—around 100 villages have been wholly or partly destroyed. Recently there has been further trouble—two Ossetians have been killed and 12 wounded, while 28 houses have been burned. The current Georgian leadership has condemned this act of banditry and has appointed a commission to investigate. But, on the whole, as you will realize, we should not talk about a functioning economy in these areas.

As for the zone we control—Tskhinvali, part of Znaurskiy Rayon, and the mountain and high-mountain zone—it had been totally blockaded until recently. In principle the blockade is still in place. There are virtually no power supplies, there is no water, houses have no heating, most enterprises are not working, and no food or freight for the national economy have been delivered from Tbilisi. I am unwilling and unable to link the continuing blockade with the T. Sigua government's policy—we have no information on that. I believe that this is the result of the overall power generation and economic crisis in Georgia.

[Gladkevich] Just how can the people live in conditions of economic ruin, a blockade, and military confrontation? After all, political slogans and hopes for independence won't fill their bellies...

[Gassiyev] You know, it's wonderful that one people's sufferings really strike a chord with mankind in general and with the people of our until recently enormous country. Throughout 1991 South Ossetia received food in the form of humanitarian aid (mainly from the FRG). We were given a great deal of help by the center and, of course, Russia did not leave us in the lurch. The Rokskiy Pass through the Caucasus became a real "lifeline" for us. Goods from fraternal North Ossetia, internal oblasts of Russia, and from abroad have been and are still coming down it. This winter, admittedly, the situation has deteriorated: The weather has become an ally of the Georgian blockade—snowfalls and sheet ice cover our "lifeline" road. Even so, we hope to make it through to spring...

Nonetheless, I must state—and I hope that politicians and the peoples will listen—that if the South Ossetia problem is not radically resolved in the very near future we can expect a complete and unconditional collapse. The region's economy would be undermined to such an extent that it would hardly be capable of rectifying itself. This in turn would lead to a real national tragedy—famine in South Ossetia, an exodus of the people, an unpredictable increase in the criminal element, and other, possibly even more terrifying social consequences.

[Gladkevich] Let's assume that the politicians listen to you. First and foremost, Georgian politicians. Would reconciliation then be possible after all that has happened between the Ossetians and Georgians?

[Gassiyev] Of course, the South Ossetian people have suffered greatly during the conflict. I have already mentioned this—around 100 villages burned and 416 people killed (I am referring only to those cases where we know for sure that someone has been killed and buried). We have information which has not been completely verified yet about another 156 people who have been killed or tortured by Georgian gunmen from various bandit formations. How many more have been lost without trace? Where are they? Are they alive and well somewhere far from their homeland, or have they been tortured and left in unmarked graves?

How many people have been left homeless? There are now almost 100,000 refugees in South Ossetia alone. Almost 50 percent more refugees from Georgia and villages not under our control are scattered across South Ossetia. Are our people really able to forget this?

And yet, I think I would be voicing the general view if I said that neither the Ossetian nor Georgian peoples need an escalation of the conflict or a kind of Beirut on Georgian soil. We can and should live in peace, and our memory of what has happened will help prevent anything similar in the future. But to this end we need immediate and responsible talks between Tskhinvali and Tbilisi. Possibly with the participation of Russia and other sovereign Commonwealth states as mediators.

[Gladkevich] But won't there be forces in South Ossetia itself which will oppose talks with Georgia and try to torpedo them? After all, it is well known that some people in Tbilisi were extremely negative about your referendum on South Ossetian independence and its reunification with Russia. And there has even been a split in the South Ossetian leadership, analysts claim...

[Gassiyev] I know about this rumored split. I even know that former USSR People's Deputy Anatoliy Chekhoyev is being named as leader of the "hard-liners"... As we know, Chekhoyev has denied this himself. And there is not even any split, there are certain differences which are entirely surmountable within the framework of normal political discussions. On the whole, the South Ossetian political leadership does not intend to raise the question of definitely seceding from Georgia.

The fact that the South Ossetian people should get reliable guarantees for their free existence unrestricted by anyone or anything, and without any discrimination is another matter.

People say that "Gamsakhurdias come and go, but the peoples remain." That's true. But if "Gamsakhurdias go" it means they can come back too. We have no faith in our leader—be it the president or the Supreme Soviet chairman. We have faith only in a well-oiled mechanism of people's power based on the constitution and on the peoples' economic interest in a peaceful and conflict-free life. There is an enormous amount of hope that this kind of mechanism will be set up as a result of talks between Tskhinvali and Tbilisi, the further development of genuine democracy in Georgia, and the creation of a new economic model based on a civilized market. That is why we totally welcome the measures being taken by the new Georgian leadership to implement a program for the phased privatization of the economy and the transfer of land to the peasants. Peoplewho know that they can only secure prosperity for themselves and their descendants through their own work will not resort to weapons when they hear hysterical claims about a "threat to national interests" and slogans along the lines of "Georgia for the Georgians."

[Gladkevich] Thank you for the interview.

From the editorial office: On Saturday 25 January preliminary talks were held in Tskhinval between South Ossetia and representatives of the Tengiz Sigua government. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA welcomes this process and expresses hope that peace will soon come to Georgian and Ossetian soil.

Military Council Temporary Posts Abolished

AU2901103492 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0500 GMT 29 Jan

[Excerpt] In accordance with the resolution of the Republic of Georgia Military Council of 10 January 1992, the post of temporary plenipotentiary of the Military Council has been abolished in those towns and rayons of the republic where peace has been established and where the situation is stable.

Proceeding from this, the Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers has established in these towns and rayons local temporary administrative organs and town and rayon committees and boards. [passage omitted]

Leaders Want Ministry To Hand Over Weapons

OW2101184192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1600 GMT 21 Jan 92

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[Text] A DP [Diplomatic Panorama] correspondent has learned from military sources that Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, Admiral Vladimir Chernavin and a number of other members of the Commonwealth's command received telegrams signed by Georgian prime-minister Tenghiz Sigua and the republic's defense minister Levan Sharashenidze asking to return to the police the weapons it handed over to the Georgian interior ministry (about 6,000 pieces, according to one estimate).

The telegrams also suggest that most important installations be guarded jointly by Georgians and units of the Transcaucasian military district and the Black Sea Fleet in the areas where it is deployed in Georgia. The purpose of the plan is to "prevent sabotage and attacks." Ten installations mentioned in the message include the Naval brigade headquarters in Poti which were twice attacked in the recent days by unknown gunmen.

Abkhazia Postpones New Name Vote for Republic

OW2901024792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1837 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Abkhazia's parliament decided to postpone the vote on a new name for the republic till next Tuesday [4 February], said parliamentarian Gennadiy Alamia to IF [INTERFAX]. Until now Abkhazia is Georgia's autonomy and continued to be named a Soviet socialist republic.

During the January 28 discussion virtually all non-Georgians spoke in favor of renaming it the Republic of Abkhazia. However, most parliamentarians were against a vote on whether the republic should secede from Georgia.

Parliamentarians of Georgian stock insist that the republic should continue to be named "autonomous."

Latvia

Opinions on Armed Forces' Structure Viewed

PM2901143592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 29 Jan 92 p 3

[Report by Captain Second Rank V. Ivanov under the "Direct Line" rubric: "'Home Guardsmen Might Be Able To Knock Out Two Dozen Tanks,' or How the Latvian Army Is Viewed by Its Creators"]

[Text] Riga—The Latvian newspaper DIENA recently published the opinion of several military specialists on ways to establish a republic army. Their opinions are extremely frank and therefore, I think, they will be of some interest to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA readers.

Thus, G. Alksnis (not to be confused with Colonel V. Alksnis), who has been appointed military attache at the Latvian Republic's mission in Moscow, believes that the delay in building a new army is occurring because "troops belonging to the former Soviet Union are not being withdrawn from our territory, and consequently garrisons are not being vacated..." According to Mr. Alksnis, "the emergence of military subunits of a Latvian army would be a psychological factor that could accelerate the withdrawal process." And here is another of the military attache's assumptions: After the introduction of Lats (the Latvian currency unit—author's note), the former Union's units will have problems getting paid and supplied.

It is also possible to learn from DIENA that, over a timeframe of two years, the Latvian Defense Ministry must create a requisite base enabling the army to recruit 8,000 fighting men. The new armed forces will consist of border guard troops and mobile rapid-reaction detachments. But at the present time the strength of the republic's armed formations is as follows: 1,000 border guard troops—who are, however, virtually unarmed; about 10,000 home guardsmen (with "very serious firepower"); and a Supreme Council guard service numbering 400 men. A Ministry of Internal Affairs system exists, whose table of organization comprises about 15,000 men including an escort regiment that is still not up to full strength.

From 1 February local border guard troops will take over the functions of the former Union Border Guard Troops at Riga airport. However, according to Defense Minister T. Jundzis, Latvia's state borders will still not be really restored this year. Information on a regular border guard's salary was also given, namely 1,536 rubles.

J. Palevskis, chief of the Home Guard Staff Operations Unit, also expressed himself most forthrightly in DIENA. He stated that "the home guardsmen have weapons, and these are reliable enough," an operations group is being prepared separately, and his detachments have the potential to confront tanks. What follows is indeed quite frank: "If the home guard leadership were to take seriously the government's call not to allow Commonwealth of Independent States Armed Forces maneuvers, the home guardsmen might be able to knock out two dozen tanks; well, from now on the government can extricate itself from the mess it has gotten itself into."

So now you can imagine how serious this "mess" might be; after all, this is a statement by an official.

Security Service Reorganized, Given New Name

OW2901162392 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1416 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The security service of the Latvian parliament has been reorganised and given a new name, the Security Service of the Latvian Republic. It now consists of three departments, one in charge of the parliament's security, another one guarding foreign embassies and diplomats' residences, and a third one fighting terrorism and organised crime.

Government Wants Military Property Examined

OW2901164892 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1416 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian parliament has decided to instruct local government bodies to examine all military areas and all armed forces property on their territory, and make suggestions to the central government on their further utilisation.

The parliament's decision was a reaction to the conduct of the military command which ignored Latvian laws and was selling off armed forces property.

4 Republics Recognized; Join Vienna Convention

LD2801201192 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Today the Supreme Council adopted a resolution to recognize the state independence of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, and Uzbekistan. The government of the Republic of Latvia was charged with holding the necessary consultations for the establishment of bilateral relations between Moldova and Latvia as soon as possible.

The Supreme Council also adopted a resolution to accede to the Vienna Convention of 1961 on consular relations. These international conventions regulate all the basic questions relating to diplomatic relations between states and the establishment and cessation of consular relations, the status of diplomatic missions and consulates and the immunity of their staff.

Popular Front Considers Upcoming Elections

OW2901003092 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1402 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian Popular Front parliament group has today begun considering the date for an election to a new parliament, the Sejms.

The majority of deputies, including the Supreme Council Chairman, Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, believe the election should not be postponed till later than the autumn of 1993.

Popular Front deputies also demand that the post of First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council should be retained. Many deputies have insisted that the post be abolished after Mr. Dainis Ivans resigned from it on January 2. The Popular Front group has two deputies to propose for it, Mr. Romans Apsitis and Mr. Valdis Birkavs.

Trade Unions Appeal For CIS Solidarity

LD3001000692 Riga Radio Riga Network in Russian 1600 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Appeal from the Union of Free Trade Unions of Latvia to Governments and trade unions of the Commonwealth of Independent States, CIS, and to the Government and trade unions of Russia—read by announcer]

[Text] Esteemed colleagues, gentlemen leaders of governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We call for solidarity and normal human understanding. The critical situation occurring in the national economy of the Republic of Latvia forces us to appeal to you, and especially to the Government of Russia. The industry of the Republic of Latvia is on the brink of collapse. The absolute majority of enterprises are experiencing most serious difficulties because of the lack of raw materials and parts. Production is stopping and has already stopped at a number of enterprises. Ordinary workers do not have the possibility to earn [word indistinct] fitting for human life [words indistinct] for an elementary standard of living. This affects tens of hundreds of thousands of the republics' inhabitants.

Most of the enterprises have concluded contracts for deliveries but they are not being carried out as a consequence of prohibitions on the part of the Russian Government. A number of metallurgical enterprises of the Ukraine, after concluding contracts, are increasing many times over the cost of materials being delivered or are refusing to deliver at all. A chain reaction of chaos arises in economic relations; it is first and foremost ordinary workers who are suffering from this.

The whole of the historically formed economic relations within industry—and the entire national economy of Latvia—is oriented toward close links with the economy of the former USSR. The enterprises located on our territory are basically monopoly producers of some of their goods. If they stop, their output will not be received by consumer enterprises located in your states, which will cause the corresponding complications for the working people at them. After all, it is known that many of our enterprises supply almost 100 percent of their output to Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus. It is hard to name an industry or enterprise in Latvia which is not linked by production processes with other regions and republics.

We ask the Governments of Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus, and other Commonwealth of Independent States to note the fact that a considerable part, if not the majority, of the people working at large enterprises are representatives of the nonindigenous population of Latvia—Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians, and other nationalities. In appealing to you we hope for commonsense in the decisions being made by you, for a feeling of mutual responsibility for the fate of millions of working people now placed in an extremely hard situation, and for traditional trade union solidarity.

Only together will we be able to overcome this difficult time, economic hardships, and everything which was left to us as a legacy from totalitarianism.

Lithuania

Russian Talks Termed 'Difficult', 'Fruitful'

OW2901195692 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1855 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Temporary Charge d'Affaires of Lithuania in Russia Ekidius Bickauskas told the press that the Russian-Lithuanian talks in Moscow January 29 "were difficult, but for the moment fruitful."

As BF [BALTFAX] reported earlier, on January 29 deputies Chairman of the Russian Government Gennadiy Burbulis and Yegor Gaydar met with Lithuanian Premier Gediminas Vagnorius in Moscow.

Bickauskas expressed hope that as a result of the meeting a flow of goods and raw materials, including oil, will go to Lithuania. At the same time, he noted that Lithuania and Russia "face very serious talks" on mutual settling in hard currency.

Chairman of a commission on economic state of emergency in Lithuania, Albertas Simenas told the newspaper "Respublika" that Russia does not supply fuel to Lithuania despite agreements reached by the two states.

Earlier, he said, leaders of the two republics Landsbergis and Yeltsin agreed to maintain 70% of last year's shipments from Russia to Lithuania.

Simenas said Russia is ready to supply oil to Lithuania for hard currency only.

A report by the Lithuanian Economy Ministry says in the first quarter of 1992, due to shortfalls of raw materials from Russia, industrial output may decline by 1,5-2 billion rubles (about 20%) leaving without jobs from 40,000 to 45,000 workers.

Since the beginning of 1992, only 16 of 27 electrotechnical industrial enterprises have been working at the full capacity. Shortfalls of raw materials in this industry alone can affect 24,000 workers. Production of kinescopes, computers, electric engines and consumer goods is on the verge of stoppage.

Shortfalls of raw materials have already affected or will affect in the near future from 13 to 15 machine-building plants: 7,000-10,000 workers may become unemployed. An iron-foundry plant in Kaunas is expected to stop production by early February. That may paralyze machine-tool industrial enterprises. The "Vairas" plant in Siauliai manufacturing bicycles is nearing stoppage. Since January a plant producing shop equipment in Kibartai has not been working, as well the "Neris" plant producing argicultural equipment in Vilnius.

In the chemical industry a plant in Kedainiai works at only 20% capacity. The "Plasta" plant making plastic items in Vilnius works at 30% capacity. Some 4,000-4,500 workers are expected to lose their jobs.

In the light industry a yarn-making plant in Mariampol, "Cotton" collants-making plant and "Vilia" knit factory can stop working within days. Unemployment can affect 6,500 workers of this industry.

On Monday [27 January] 1,500 workers of the "Elfa" Vilnius-based plant producing engines stopped work because of disruption of copper wire shipments by the "Lietkabelis" plant in Panevezys which in its turn is caused by lack of raw materials from Russia, the newspaper "Respublika" says. As a result, 3 workshops of the Panevezys plant stopped work on Monday.

As technical director of "Lietkabelis" Sergey Yershov told "Respublika", if the situation with supplies remains unchanged, about 40,000 workers of the electrotechnical industry may loose jobs in February. "A compressor-making plant in Mazeikai, "Elfa", a plant of radiocomponents in Vilnius, "Elektra" in Kaunas and plants producing TV equipment would stop then," Yershov warned.

Vagnorius Returns From Moscow

LD2901212292 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1900 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Text] Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius, who this morning left by air for Moscow, had a meeting with Gennadiy Burbulis, state secretary of the Russian Federation and first deputy chairman of the government, and Deputy Prime Minister Fedor Gaydar.

They discussed the settlement of the supply of oil and other material resources to Lithuania.

A few hours ago the prime minister returned from Moscow with hopeful news: The negotiations were difficult but he succeeded in rejecting demands to settle accounts for oil in hard currency, stated Gediminas Vagnorius in a meeting with government members. From 1 February, the Mazeikiai oil refinery will once again be supplied with 18,000 tonnes of oil per day, as it is envisaged in the agreement for the current quarter. It is true, we are going to pay a little more for the oil than we do now, but in rubles.

Other issues of the supply of material resources to Lithuania were settled according to conditions acceptable to both parties.

Poll Shows Landsbergis Remains Most Popular

OW3001014292 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1855 GMT 29 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An opinion poll taken by the sociological service of Vilnius University at the request of the Lithuanian Government showed that Chairman of parliament Vytautas Landsbergis remains the most popular political leader in Lithuania.

He is followed by temporary charge d'affaires of Lithuania in Moscow Egidijus Bickauskas and then by Prime Hinister Gediminas Vagnorius. Algirdas Brazauskas, leader of the Lithuanian Deaocratic Party of Labor is in the 9th place.